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East Meets West: The Perception of  
Japanese and Chinese Theatres in the  
Context of Edinburgh International Festival  
Programming Policy

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
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## Abstract

East Meets West: The Perception of Japanese and Chinese Theatres in the Context of Edinburgh International Festival Programming Policy aims to explore the issues around intercultural translation and whether or not intercultural theatre can even truly represent non-domestic texts without distortion.

In order to explore this in detail, this thesis uses as its research target an in-depth analysis of two productions produced at Edinburgh International Festival (EIF). Edinburgh International Festival was chosen as an appropriate cultural platform for this discussion due to its international recognition. In order to reveal the Eurocentric-oriented ideology within the Festival's policy and discuss the implications of this Eurocentric ideology for possibilities of intercultural translation, the thesis will explore the changes in programming policy by different EIF Festival Directors since 1947.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* is used as major reference regarding the Eurocentric ideology, and the concept of Western Interculturalism. Several occidental and semi-western views are explored with relation to Broadway production on oriental themes in order to further explore Said's idea of "Orientalism". The thesis shows how this idea is present in the EIF's context, based on an in-depth analysis of two intercultural productions of *Macbeth*: Ninagawa and Kunju. The aim is to show how these two productions represent a Western audience's voice.

Since the question of identification is one of the major concerns in intercultural theatre practice, the thesis discusses the issues of identity and analyses potential for indigenous Asian theatre forms to engage in intercultural exchange in a way that would be built on equality rather than changing those forms to suit Western audiences' understanding. Accordingly, two intercultural productions of Ninagawa and Kunju *Macbeth*, which were presented on EIF's stage in 1985 and 1987 respectively, and their performance texts will be analysed in terms of the implication of EIF's programming policy on Japan's and China's theatre works presented at the Festival. The resulting research outcomes indicate that equal exchange and authentic representation between different cultures may be impossible.

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participate in this interview.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodology

### 1.1 Introduction

This research investigates possibilities of true translation/representation by intercultural theatre practices of original social/cultural contexts without distortion. In order to examine and develop hypotheses concerning issues involved in this complex area, the thesis explores the underlying connection between EIF's programming policy and the issues of artistic identity in the context of two intercultural performances of *Macbeth*. In order to do this, it will consider two contrasting productions of *Macbeth* that were presented at Edinburgh International Festival (EIF): a Japanese production by Yukio Ninagawa (蜷川幸雄) in 1985, and a Chinese production by Shanghai Kunju Theatre (上海崑劇團) in 1987.

In order to facilitate this objective, this thesis will explore such areas as the cultural role of EIF and its programming policy and the artistic identities in these intercultural productions of *Macbeth*. The main focus for this analysis will relate to cultural diversity and exchange; Western theatre's expectations of Eastern theatre under the influence of Occidental ideologies, such as Orientalism and Interculturalism, as well as Asian theatre's artistic identity within intercultural practice. It will essentially explore the hypothesis that the relationship between EIF's programming policy and its inherently Western perception towards Japanese and Chinese theatre has a negative impact on the artistic identity of Asian theatre. Accordingly, this research uses the impact of the changes in the



programming policy at EIF to illustrate the intercultural issues of Japanese and Chinese theatre's identities, as raised by British critics. To extend this argument, this thesis discovers that neither British critics nor Western audiences understood the presented material because they were working from their own indigenous cultural viewpoints.

The world has changed rapidly after the Second World War in aspects of politics, economy and culture, and many colonies have sought independence from their overlords; the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union seems to declare that democracy has overwhelmed Communism. Many scholars such as Peter Berger in his *The Capitalist Revolution* (1986) have presented findings that Capitalism is better than Socialism in terms of its effect on human nature and economic development. Furthermore, China opened her domestic market to the world and established a market-oriented economic system which has attracted numerous enterprises to invest in the world's largest market as well as factory base. Meanwhile, the USA has replaced former European empires and imposed not only its political and economic power, but also its culture on the world, effectively proclaiming itself the world's policeman and arbiter of global culture.

These shifts in world political, economic and cultural strength have also affected the development of world theatre. New forms have been created in part by Western artists, such as Peter Brook and Ariane Mnouchkine, who fused Eastern and Western theatrical techniques in their works by appropriating elements from Indian epic and Japanese theatre arts. Similarly, Eastern artists,

such as Yukio Ninagawa and the artists of Shanghai Kunju Theatre, have also established hybrid forms. Ninagawa presented his Easternised *Macbeth*, *Medea* and *The Tempest* on the EIF stage in 1985, 1986 and 1988 respectively. Discourses on the phenomena of intercultural practices have also been conducted by both Western and Eastern scholars as well as by artists (the terms 'Western scholars' and 'artists' used here, also denote the person who now resides in the West but whose roots are in the East). In order to avoid ambiguity about what is intercultural, the definition of intercultural in this research employs Patrice Pavis's concept in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* as a reference: 'The definition of Intercultural here will be limited to the exchange or reciprocal influence of theatrical practices (acting, *mise en scene*, stage adaptations of 'foreign' material).' (1996:2)

In response to this perspective, the productions selected for discussion in this research are: Yukio Ninagawa's production of Yushi Odashina's (小田島 雄志) translation of *Macbeth* (this 1985 version is known as *Ninagawa Macbeth – NINAGAWA マクベス* ), which was performed at the Lyceum Theatre in 1985 and transferred to the Royal National Theatre, London in 1987; Shanghai Kunju Theatre's production of Zheng Shifeng's (鄭拾風) adaptation of *Macbeth* (the Chinese title for which was *The Bloody Hand – 血手記*), which was performed at Leith Theatre in 1987 and had a European tour afterward. Since this research utilizes Patrice Pavis's idea in terms of the definition of 'intercultural' mentioned above, then Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre's *Macbeth* will be perfectly

suited as examples of this definition, as both tried to adapt 'foreign material' in terms of script, and fused it with their own theatrical characters, thus creating two unique versions of *Macbeth*.

Importantly, the analysis of these productions is concerned with how their artistic interpretation and theoretical language such as technical presentation were received by festival critics; the analysis of Shakespeare's original text alongside these intercultural works is not of primary concern for this research. On the contrary, the focus of the performance analysis in this thesis is on investigating and exploring the form of presentation and performance techniques. They translated Shakespeare into their distinctive traditions and revealed their own artistic characters. Bearing in mind that there may be a confusion regarding the usage of terms Kunju (崑劇) and Kunqu (崑曲), there is a need to clarify usage. In Chinese, the term Kunju is more related to the form, whereas the term Kunqu indicates both the form and the music. This thesis will use Kunju instead of Kunqu throughout unless there is a special concern with Kunju's music.

This thesis will examine the published literature as well as other materials that are associated with this research topic. While this project covers the fields of Japanese theatre, Kunju as well as other art traditions in China, the investigation will rely heavily on materials in Japanese and Chinese which are still unavailable in English versions. All of the significant terms and names from non-English countries will be translated into phonetic English, followed by the original characters as they first appeared, as well as being shown in Appendix 1. As

there are so many spelling systems to translate Chinese into English, this thesis will apply the *Pin-yin* (Chinese Romanization – 漢語拼音 System) documented by the transliteration reference system in the Taiwan National Library at <http://140.111.34.69:8080/nationallibrary/index.jsp?open>. In addition, Chinese characters have also been divided into Traditional (Taiwan and Hong Kong) and Simplified (Mainland China and Singapore) since Mao Tse-tung took over political power in China. Thus, as a Taiwanese person, the author of this thesis will use the traditional Chinese characters where necessary throughout this thesis.

Patrice Pavis states in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* that 'intercultural' does not mean the gathering of artists of different nationalities or national practices in a festival (1996:5). Though Pavis might disagree that a festival itself can be seen as an intercultural product, many Western international arts festivals are still an appropriate place for the presentation and study of intercultural theatre practices. Observing these festivals is also a good way to learn about responses from the critics and reviewers who might be reflecting and/or influencing the view of the general audience in terms of the ideologies of Orientalism and Eurocentrism.

The reason for selecting Edinburgh International Festival as the research target is that EIF, with its worldwide reputation as a leading intercultural performing arts event, presents a good case study for the purposes of this thesis. Most companies, both in the East and the West, regard an invitation from the

Edinburgh Festival Society – the official organiser of the EIF – as an indisputable honour. In order to understand whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre practices, this thesis will start by investigating and exploring the programming policy of the EIF in Chapter 2.

Throughout the EIF's history, the programming policy has been developed by the Festival's directors. The direction of programming saw significant changes during Frank Dunlop's tenure (between 1984 and 1991). Although his programming policy was controversial, as the only theatre director who has held this post throughout EIF's history, Frank Dunlop used the Festival as a tool to attract ordinary people. He also created the World Theatre Season in 1986, which presented companies from all over the world. Based on the evidence from programme analysis, theatres from some countries never had the opportunity to appear on EIF's stage except when Dunlop held the commissioning power. The details of his achievement will be described in Chapter 2.2.

While this research is mainly focused on the period of Frank Dunlop's directorship, it also needs to cover the tenure of the rest of the directors since 1947 for the sake of validity and to distinguish its Eurocentric programming tendency. Therefore, this research into the programming policy at EIF is divided into three stages: The first stage will primarily be focused on Dunlop's tenure, to discover the principles and criteria he used for programming (in Chapter 2.2.1); in order to critique Dunlop, the second stage will compare his tenure with that of the two directors before and after him, these being John Drummond (1979-

1983) and Brian McMaster (1992-2000)<sup>1</sup> (in Chapter 2.2.2). These comparisons will be used to examine the programme strategy throughout its history and identify its development with the periods of 'The Frank Dunlop Dynasty' and 'The John Drummond and Brian McMaster Regimes'; then from a macro-historical perspective, the third stage will cover the directors before John Drummond, under the heading 'The Sovereignities since 1947'. The directors Rudolf Bing (1947-1949); Ian Hunter (1950-1955); Robert Ponsonby (1956-1960); Lord Harewood (1961-1965) and Peter Diamond (1966-1978) will be covered in this stage (in Chapter 2.2.3.).

The period for consideration of this research ends in 2000, as this study primarily focuses on EIF's programme within the twentieth century; enabling this study to analyse the data in depth without being interrupted by current unexpected events at EIF. The programme for discussion is only concerned with the art forms of opera, orchestra concerts, drama and dance; recital concerts as well as other events will not be included. In addition, there will also be a brief introduction to discuss the scenario within each stage of the festival, followed by an exploration of the programming policy from political and financial perspectives of as well as personal expertise and preference.

EIF is as an influential platform for the purpose of cultural exchange and it should be presenting a programme by companies from diverse cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Although Brian McMaster was still in the position through the 2006 Festival, this research will only investigate his programme up to 2000.

backgrounds. According to Femi Folorunso, the Arts Development Officer of the Scottish Arts Council, as stated in *Cultural Diversity Strategy* (2002):

Performing groups from Latin America and Africa appear spasmodically at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, while a number of organisations, such as the Edinburgh Mela, the Scottish Indian Arts Forum, and the Glasgow-based Scottish Academy of Asian Arts, have periodically endeavoured to bring in visual and performing artists from many parts of Asia to Scotland. However, few arts organisations or events managers have been able to embrace cultural diversity in a way that would make members of the home-based minority ethnic population visible as producers in the arts sector. Those who do, tend to see diversity as closely bound with a wider European and North American representation of culture. (p.11)

Using Femi Folorunso's statement, the issues of whether EIF truly represents cultural diversity within its programme will be explored in Chapter 5.

Since Western Interculturalism draws its roots from Orientalism<sup>2</sup>, the shift in EIF's programming policy has also shown that there is a need to expose Occidental ideology such as Eurocentrism as reflected in the presentations of Japanese and Chinese theatres. Accordingly, Edward Said's *Orientalism* will be the major reference in this thesis to analyse the ideology of Western Interculturalism. Chapter 3 will discuss Said's concept. This will be followed by an investigation of the expectations from a Western point of view, especially that of theatre critics, that Asian theatre is generally highly imaginative. The influence of Western criticism on Asian theatre's achievements is enormous. According to Chau-ming Chen (陳曉明), who is the Professor of Chinese Literature in Peking University (北京大學) and author of *Post-eastern Viewpoint – Through the*

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<sup>2</sup> Said's term 'Orientalism' is used here to represent the Western perception of Eastern cultures.

*Historical Appearance of Post-colonies* (後東方觀點 – 穿越後殖民化的歷史表象)

(1995), there is an unwritten rule in the realms of literature, arts and academic studies in contemporary China, suggesting that the definition of success has to be approved by Western 'authorities.' Apart from the approval of its artistic achievement, positive reviews – especially of the reputable arts events that EIF puts on – are vital to theatre companies not only because they can result in box office success, but also because they can result in obtaining further subsidy and sponsorship from public and private sectors in their home countries.

Unlike traditional theatre forms in China, which are still struggling to find appropriate means of applying cultural translation, cinematography has been more successful in this field. As an example of Western cultural influence on China, we can use the example of Yi-mou Zhang (張藝謀), a renowned Chinese film director, some of whose films were nominated or received awards in Western countries. For example, *Raise the Red Lantern* (紅燈籠, 1991) received the award for Best Foreign Language Film not only from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) but also from the New York Film Critics' Circle Awards. *Hero* (英雄), Zhang's 2002 blockbuster, was also nominated as the Best Foreign Language Film in the Academy Awards and Golden Globes and Best Foreign Film in the British Independent Film Awards.

Zhang, as one of the crucial figures in the global film industry, was able to develop his work by receiving financial commissions from Western investors after he had gained a reputation in the West. In the meantime, Yi-wu Zhang (張



頤武), one of China's social critics and the Professor of Chinese Literature at Peking University, argues in his *Yi-mou Zhang in the Discourse of Global Post-colonialism* (全球後殖民語境中的張藝謀) (1995) that Yi-mou Zhang's works on Chinese subjects were seen and interpreted through Western eyes.

Echoing this argument, many scholars, particularly those from non-Western countries, have begun to question their own identity and the cultural imperialism imposed upon them by the West. Although *Kunju Macbeth* was not as well received by Western critics as Yi-mou Zhang's works were, it showed that the Shanghai Kunju Theatre was trying to break cultural barriers by adapting a Western text and presenting it in a traditional Kunju manner.

Consequently, the investigation in Chapter 3 starts to look into the expectations of Asian theatre from a Western viewpoint in which Orientalism and Western Interculturalism will be examined in order to identify the realities of how artists, both in the West and East, view their own intercultural theatre practices by appropriating foreign elements. The exploration will be divided into three stages. The first stage is intercultural performance from a Western point of view, which is purely through Westerners' perspective (discussed in Chapter 3.2.2); the second is intercultural performance from the Sino-American perspective, which is an expression from David Henry Hwang – a descendant of Chinese immigrants in America (presented in Chapter 3.2.3). Both these stages mentioned above explore the implications of Chinese theatre works/techniques performed in the West.

In fact, there is still a shortage of representative Chinese productions on the British stage. In contrast, Broadway has experience of offering audiences thoughts on Oriental fantasy which is suggestive of fairy tales, rather than a realistic understanding of Chinese culture. One might argue that the situation in the USA cannot be recreated in the West as a whole. However, it is undeniable that EIF has held a very strong connection with America throughout EIF's history, from its programming perspective, which involved a large number of American productions, to Frank Dunlop – the major focus for the exploration in this thesis – a British director who gained his success in New York. Furthermore, Broadway has also had a strong influence on Western audiences' expectations towards Chinese subjects, not only through its huge investment in Chinese themed productions, but also by the size of the audience it attracts. In order to explore the reality of intercultural performances from both Western and Sino-American viewpoints, the experiences of Chinese theatre works on the Broadway stage will be borrowed and examined (in Chapter 3.2).

Meanwhile, the debate on the subject of intercultural practices has become a controversial issue. Pavis suggests in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996) that we should only locate intercultural performance 'as a crucible in which performance techniques are tested against and amalgamated with the techniques that receive and fashion them.' (p.2) In other words, Pavis does not agree that we can turn physical intercultural works into an intangible sphere for analysing cultural identities. However, this thesis aims to prove otherwise.

Therefore, one of the goals in this thesis is to identify particularly the connection between Orientalism and the reviews of both Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth*. This research will also argue the notion put forward by Pavis, that intercultural practices are involved not only in the physical evidence from foreign cultures, but also in the integration of 'Others' ideologies. Then, this is followed up by exploring the interaction between the reviews (from Edinburgh in Chapter 3, along with reviews from London as supportive evidence in Chapter 5) and the productions of Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth* as two examples of intercultural practice (in Chapter 3.3).

The third stage will consider an intercultural performance from an authentic Eastern standpoint, exploring the views of Eastern artists still resident in the East, using the productions of *Macbeth* by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre as examples for the discussion in Chapter 4. Asian theatre arts have become a treasury for Western artists to 'poach' and embellish their intercultural theatre works. This research will explore the reverse concept, which is not Western Interculturalism but Eastern. Considered to be one of the Western masters in the field of intercultural practice, Peter Brook describes in *The Shifting Point* (1987):

Each culture expresses a different portion of the inner atlas; the complete human truth is global, and the theatre is the place in which the jigsaw can be pieced together (p.129)

In Chapter 4, this research will examine how this jigsaw, as mentioned by Brook, was put together in the Western script for *Macbeth* by the Asian Yukio Ninagawa

and Shanghai's Kunju Theatre.

After seeing Shanghai Kunju Theatre's *Macbeth*, Robert Dawson Scott stated in *Kunju Macbeth* in the Glasgow Herald (28 August 1987) that...

If bringing world theatre to the Festival is intended, in part at least, to produce an element of culture shock, Frank Dunlop has really hit the jackpot this time. (p.4)

Chapter 4.1 will begin by dealing with the issue of culture shock that Scott described above. This will be followed by an exploration of the subject of identity and an illustration of how this cultural shock and self-awareness has influenced the development of the artistic concept in both Yukio Ninagawa and Kunju and their intercultural *Macbeths*.

According to Yukio Ninagawa, Japanese traditional performing arts such as Noh and Kabuki have not been taught in contemporary acting schools in Japan for over a hundred years, so he had to start from Western acting techniques and literature rather than from the traditional Eastern ones (Minamihiro, 1994:118). By contrast, most of the leading artists in Kunju *Macbeth* had studied their traditional performing techniques since they were young. These artists through their office in Shanghai Kunju Theatre are regarded as 'Panda Hall (熊貓館)', because they are as much of a national treasure in China as are pandas.

Japan's Ninagawa Company and China's Shanghai Kunju Theatre, which have presented their works at EIF, presented their material in terms of creating hybrid forms that might be palatable to Western audiences. Using all the available evidence, Chapter 4.2 and 4.3 will also examine these two productions as to

aspects of the intentions of their adaptations and their performance texts within their social and cultural contexts for further analysis in the following chapter – Theoretical Discussion. In order to analyse the elements of performance, the performance techniques, visual imagery, as well as music used will be explored respectively. Since cultural translation will always be problematic, the issue is how the Westerner sees the Other and vice versa. Ironically, intercultural performances began with works in which Western artists borrowed the ingredients from the East, and are now reversed by Eastern artists who grasp the Western elements and even represent them in front of Western audiences.

According to Ninagawa in *Thousand Knives, Thousand Eyes* (千のナイフ・千の目, 1993), "unlike some directors who modify the script, I have never done that because if I do, then my framework will collapse." (Ninagawa, 1993:103-104) In contrast, Gong Boan (龔伯安), who was the set designer in the *Kunju Macbeth*, declares in the interview that the *Kunju Macbeth* is not simply *Macbeth* any more after adaptation. Instead, it is entitled *The Bloody Hand* (血手記), representing the authentic characteristics of Kunju style, and becomes part of traditional Chinese theatre.

Chapter 5, will reveal whether or not Edinburgh International Festival truly carries out its mission to present to its audience works from as wide a cultural background as possible. Furthermore it will discuss if East meets West in the two *Macbeths* and why the reception in Edinburgh varied when these two companies translated Shakespeare into two distinct Eastern traditions with

varying degrees of alteration from those traditions. This chapter also tackles the issue of whether communication is possible between Eastern and Western theatrical traditions without being compromised by the concerns of Orientalism and Occidentalism.

As an in-depth analysis, this research aims to decode the metaphors within those two intercultural presentations by exploring the underlying connection between the programming policy and productions in detail. It also inquires into the viewpoints of reviewers and artists. These interrogations will be supported by some of the most influential theories from secondary sources such as Orientalism and Interculturalism. The criticisms of Kunju *Macbeth* from an Eastern perspective will also be used to support the British critics' opinions. To aid comprehension, there will be some photographic illustrations associated with this research displayed in Appendix 5. Finally, Chapter 6, the last section in this thesis, as a conclusion, summarises this study and confirms that equal exchange and authentic representation between different cultures is impossible. This chapter also give ideas for further academic development.

## 1.2 Evaluation of Primary Materials: Literature, Archives (Reviews and Visual Materials) and Interviews

### 1.2.1 Literatures and Archives (Theatrical Reviews and Visual Materials)<sup>3</sup>

Documentary sources of data can be used in various ways in social research. In the case of this project, documentary data is used in conjunction with interviews and provides a check on the validity and reliability of the project. The relationship between critics and audience is always problematic. The audience is reliant on reviews for their theatre consumption; however, their needs may be at odds, in that critics are less concerned with entertainment value than with creating their own opinionated reviews. The changes in programming policy at EIF have affected the relationship between British critics and the artistic identities of Japanese and Chinese theatres, but their influence on each other remains unclear. Based on these concerns and also because performances of Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeth* took place almost twenty years ago, it is virtually impossible to access audience opinion using methods of participant observation or interviews. Using published critical reviews in conjunction with the results from interviews with artists in Shanghai and arts managers in Edinburgh

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<sup>3</sup> Every effort has been made to locate page numbers for the reviews cited in this thesis, however, on occasion the reviews used are from the London Theatre Record and full publication details have not been recorded. Also, some of them were unavailable in the National Library of Scotland as well as the Central Library, Edinburgh. As a consequence, there are a small number of reviews that do not have full publication details. As these reviews provide valuable information, the decision has been taken to include them in this thesis and in the Bibliography, albeit without the full bibliographic details.

should solve this problem. The methodology of the interviews will be described in section 1.2.2, Interviews, below.

Since this research covers the fields of EIF's programming policy and the artistic identity of Japanese and Chinese theatre, most of the significant published materials which relate to those subjects will be studied. As to EIF, documents in the Edinburgh Room in the Central Library (Edinburgh) and the National Library of Scotland serve as important sources of empirical data, including historical resources and archival data, government information, articles from the press and quantitative data such as statistical records. These documents are especially useful for analysing the programming policy of the EIF relating to cultural exchange, which in turn maintains the discussion of artistic identity within the intercultural practice of British critical review.

It is argued<sup>4</sup> that critics cannot represent the opinions of spectators'; however, there is agreement that reviews have a huge influence on the outcome at the box office and drive audience expectations. All of the reviews are found in Edinburgh and London-based publications such as *The Scotsman*, *The Observer*, *The Guardian* and *The London Evening Standard*. Although most reviews are inevitably subjective, it is still applicable to explore the connection between the contents and underlying ideologies which are associated with

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<sup>4</sup> Primary sources for this observation are taken from interviews with Tomek Borkowy, Simon Girdler and the discussion on Scottish Web Theatre Forum. However, since the interviews with Borkowy, Girdler and James Waters (the EIF's former Associate Director) were informal without recording the content, this thesis then will only use very small amount of content as reference.



Orientalism. Opinions and critiques from the Festival organisation are also included in this analysis. *Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996*, by Eileen Miller, and the criticisms mentioned above are used as primary sources by which to explore and analyse the subject of EIF's programming policy.

Since the topics of Orientalism and Interculturalism in theatre are wide, this research will only deal with the issue of artistic identity through the translation of a Shakespeare play into Japanese and Chinese theatrical traditions, as represented by Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre. Edward Said's well-established theories on the roles of Orientalism and cultural imperialism are controversial in terms of his stinging critique of existing Western views of the East. However, as Michael Hays states in *Representing Empire: Class, Culture and Popular Theatre in the Nineteenth Century* (1995), there is much in Said's writing which is still significant. In order to reveal the prejudice within ideologies towards the East by Western writers, Said investigated geographic and human relations as redeployed and represented through narrative works from France and Britain, the two colonial superpowers of the nineteenth century. This research has proved to be invaluable because he explored the fact that dominant Western political/cultural discourse attempted to dismiss the possibilities of alternative views of the East.

This thesis will look into the reviews of the intercultural versions of *Macbeth* to search for traces of Edward Said and the Chinese scholar Zhu Kang's (朱剛) theories of Orientalism. Also, the published literature relating to the theories of

Orientalism and Interculturalism by both Western and Eastern scholars and artists such as Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, Patrice Pavis, Rustom Bharucha, Ping-hui Liao (廖炳惠), Jing-yuan Zhang (張京媛) and John Tomlinson as well as other Western and Eastern scholars, theorists and artists will be examined. These references will be analysed together with theatre reviews to identify the perception of the critics of those two *Macbeths*, whether driven by Orientalism or Interculturalism.

For a more populist approach to Eastern themes as viewed in the West, this thesis will then move to New York. It will show the significance of the representation of Japanese and Chinese works on the Broadway stage by Western artists (as well as by David Henry Hwang, a Sino-American artist). *Bailaohui De Zhongguo Ticai Yu Zhongguo Xiqu* (百老匯的中國題材與中國戲曲 – *Chinese Stories and Operas in Broadway*) by Wen-chuan Du (杜文傳) and *Madame Butterfly* by David Hwang will be the main focus of this study.

With regards to the artistic concepts and performance techniques of both Ninagawa and Kunju's *Macbeth*, this research will explore the development of both productions by identifying connections with their own social and cultural contexts. Scholars such as Benito Ortolani and Karen Brazell are the major figures advancing an overall understanding of the evolution of artistic identity in Japanese theatre. Similarly, Yi-lueng Gao (高義龍), Xiao Lee (李曉), Jian Dong (董健), and Xu-sheng Shi (施旭升), are major references for the Chinese theatre. Additional information about Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre

comes from Yukio Ninagawa's writings and *Shanghai Kunju Opera* by Jia-ji Fang and Jian-ming Zhu as well as from other materials. Also, *Blood-stained Hands: Macbeth in Kunju Form* by Ruru Li is the only published paper that has focused primarily on the description of this production. This research will rely heavily on this reference, but will develop new thoughts at the end.

In addition, Simon Girdler<sup>5</sup>, a former EIF Box Office Manager, said in an interview with the author that sometimes he had been confused by the content of reviews and started to question if this was the same show he had seen last night. In order to analyse the productions in detail and avoid the potential problem of the divergence between the reviews and the real productions, the videos of both the *Macbeths* will be brought into play as prominent evidence and employed in the analysis.

Unlike archival data, government information and articles from the press are easy to find. However, visual materials such as the videos of both productions of *Macbeth* were difficult to obtain. Ninagawa's *Macbeth* was out of print, and Kunju *Macbeth* was never on the market. Restricted by poor Japanese language skills, the author received great assistance from Nozomi Abe who fortunately found the Ninagawa *Macbeth* video (1985 version) on Japan's Yahoo auction website. In addition, a Kunju *Macbeth* video was found in the Shanghai Kunju Theatre when the author carried out fieldwork investigation there in the summer of 2004.

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<sup>5</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Simon Girdler, Edinburgh, 18 November 2004, n.p.

Even though Patrice Pavis suggests that video recording can reproduce the real time and general movement of a performance, as the author used to be a stage manager, he recognises that sometimes such recordings of live performing arts lose the true definition of a production, especially of lighting effects. Considering that there is no alternative solution, it is inevitable that the analysis of those two videos will be interpreted through the author's expertise and experience. However, it will be backed up by other relevant documented material such as Pavis' *Analyzing Performance – Theater, Dance, and Film*; *Shanghai Kunju Opera* and *Blood-stained Hands: Macbeth in Kunju Form*.

### **1.2.2 Interviews**

The methodology of interview is applied in this thesis to uncover EIF's programming policy and its interaction with Japanese and Chinese intercultural theatre works and its artistic identities. These results are found through a process of interviewing as part of an integrated field study, and by examination of relevant interviews conducted by other researchers as well as by journalists. Primarily, the reason that interviews have been chosen as part of the research strategy for this project is because they provide a means of ascertaining the intention of intercultural transformation by the members of the production team at Shanghai Kunju Theatre. It also explores the intention of programming policy and critics' influence on the members of EIF as well as on arts managers in Britain. This does not mean accepting wholeheartedly or without question their

intentions, but rather using that understanding as a basis for exploration and analysis of each interviewee's opinion. In order to facilitate this aim of the thesis, it is necessary to establish what the intentions of the interviewees are. The best way to determine those intentions is through interviewing the artists of both productions, the members of EIF and arts managers in Britain.

Moreover, the decision to undertake face-to-face interviews with available members is justified by the criteria established by Bill Gillham in *The Research Interview* (2000) as to when to use interviews:

[ When ] small numbers of people are involved...Most of the questions are 'open' and require an extended response...Everyone is 'key' and you cannot afford to lose any...Depth of meaning is central, with only some approximation to typicality...Research aims mainly require insight and understanding. (p.11)

Research into the intentions of intercultural transformation inherent in the two *Macbeth* productions involved interviewing ten artists in Shanghai's Kunju Theatre by the author of this thesis himself. Eight out of the ten interviewees were directly involved in the production of Kunju *Macbeth* nearly twenty years ago. The other two interviewees were the current company director and an artist with the company on tour in 1987. Unfortunately, there was no response from Yukio Ninagawa giving permission for an interview. Therefore, all of his opinions quoted here are based on old documents. In addition, research into the programming policy and its interaction with the artistic identities of Japanese and Chinese theatre as well as the role of the critics was undertaken by interviewing members of EIF and theatre arts managers in Edinburgh and London. The most

important justification for interviewing corresponds to the last two reasons in Gillham's criteria: for better depth of meaning and collocation with research aims.

As Hugh Coolican states in *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology* (1999), the particular population we are interested in, and from which we draw our samples, is known as the 'target population'. In order to obtain first-hand information about the artists' experience of Ninagawa's and Kunju *Macbeth* within an intercultural context, and their contact with audiences in the West, the author conducted a series of interviews in Shanghai with artists from Shanghai's Kunju Theatre. The target population selected for interview were: Li-chen Shen (沈利群 – music adapter/composer in *Macbeth*), Bo-an Gong (龔伯安 – set designer in *Macbeth*), Yong-feng Xia, (夏永鳳 – Costume designer and make up master in *Macbeth*, *The Woman Warrior* and *The Peony Pavilion*), Zheng-hua Ji (計鎮華 – as Macbeth), Jing-xian Zhang (張靜嫻 – as Lady Macbeth), Ming-rong Zhang (張銘榮 – Associate Director in *Macbeth* & as Witch), Yang Fang (方洋 – as Banquo), Yi-lung Liu (劉異龍 – as The Royal Physician), as well as Zheng-ren Cai (蔡正仁), the director of the theatre and Zhi-quan Wang (王芝泉 – who also performed in *The Women Warrior*).

The target population also included James Waters, who is the Associate Festival Director at EIF, Simon Girdler, who is the former EIF Box Office Manager, Thelma Holt and Tomek Borkowy who were further questioned as to the role of

critics and to gain an overall picture of Edinburgh Festivals. Holt was Yukio Ninagawa's British producer and Borkowy is an experienced programmer at Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the Artistic Director of Universal Arts. All the interviews were conducted by the author of this thesis except for that with Thelma Holt. While the author was away for the fieldwork investigation in Taiwan, Nozomi Abe helped the research process by interviewing Holt.

According to Sue Jones in her *Depth Interviewing* (1985):

In order to understand other persons' constructions of reality, we would do well to ask them...and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and *a priori* by ourselves) and with a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings. (p.46)

The process of interviewing, although problematic, is held to be the best method of acquiring depth of meaning – depth of meaning being defined as involving generating new information, clarification of disputed areas and testing previously held hypotheses. A semi-structured interview schema was employed in this research, which allowed the interviewees freedom in constructing their responses and proved the most effective for generating new information. Freedom of response also served as a counter-balance to the subjective role of the interviewer in determining the interview schema by allowing respondents' scope in their answers.

It must also be acknowledged, however, that distinguished interviewees do not always have the time available for preliminary and secondary interviews; therefore, given concerns regarding time and costs, there was only a single

opportunity for the author to interview the artists.

There are still weaknesses in the interview approach: the influence of time, subjectivity and critical responses can impinge on the reliability of the information. So, this research has encountered difficulties in the amassing of evidence; however, interviews with the participants do, to an extent, fill the void created by the ephemeral nature of the source material in terms of gathering new information, seeking clarification and testing hypotheses.



## Chapter 2: Edinburgh International Festival

Edinburgh has already smoothed out her habitual frown and is taking on an Athenian aspect. When the fiddlers tune up this August they may be playing in a new era. (James Bridie, BBC Third Programme, 11th April 1947)

### 2.1 Introduction

The central argument in this chapter is to explore the Eurocentric reality of Edinburgh International Festival's programming policy. Considered to be one of the major annual cultural events in Britain, EIF plays an extremely important, functional role in relation to cultural diversity and international exchange. It also carries forward the significant work of presenting diverse cultural experiences to Scotland and the rest of the UK. In an interview with Allan Massie, the editor of *Festival Times*, John Drummond strongly declares that he has always believed that the Festival's existence is to present the world to the Scots, rather than to present Scottish culture to the world. At the time, there were few foreign companies performing in the UK, and even fewer intercultural theatre works were available at the Festival or elsewhere. EIF aimed to become an intercultural platform to accommodate theatre companies from all over the world. Expressing a similar thought about the Festival, the former Festival Director Sir Brian McMaster, who led the Festival between 1992 and 2006, explains that EIF's programming must reflect different needs at different times and for different audiences. He says:

The Edinburgh Festival can do things that can't be done anywhere else, and therefore we have a responsibility to do them. In other words, it's exactly the sort of international event that you wouldn't see in the West End – or even, unfortunately, at the National (Theatre). (Morrison, 2000:16-17)

EIF's current Public Affairs Director, Joanna Baker, justifies receiving additional funding by declaring that the Festival shows people 'things that they cannot see at any other time of the year.' (*The Scotsman*, 15 March 2003, p.5) She continues, 'When we work with a Scottish theatre company, we might well try to bring in an international director. That's the kind of thing a Festival can deliver.' (p.5) This collaboration of indigenous theatre companies and international directors could be seen as a sort of cultural exchange.

From theatre critic Mark Fisher's point of view, Festival Director Brian McMaster has a unique approach to the inclusion of Scottish productions. Previously, foreign productions were rarely performed in Britain, so the EIF was keen to bring more over. However, foreign theatre nowadays is more mainstream and popular, so McMaster is thinking of putting on more native Scottish programmes in the Festival.

Even though EIF is well-developed now, the establishment of the Festival -- with the purpose of keeping the city of Edinburgh on the world's modern cultural map -- was fraught with difficulties. Looking back to two years before the EIF was formed, the idea of creating a festival in Edinburgh as a platform for cultural exchange was opposed by a group of government officials. According to Eileen Miller in *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996* (1996), in May 1945, Rudolf Bing was frustrated and disappointed when he received no response

from the City Council after meeting with Sir John Falconer.<sup>6</sup> He wrote a letter to Henry Harvey Wood<sup>7</sup> and asked him to investigate the reason for the city council's silence. Following this request, Wood went to the City Chambers and met Baillie Stevenson, who was in charge of the city's parks and halls.

There was an argument made by Stevenson in favour of a policy that would gravitate towards favouring provincial flavours:

It would be unfair to the Reid Orchestra to bring foreign orchestras and conductors to Edinburgh; there would be insufficient patrons in the city to support additional concerts by visiting orchestras; and he concluded by suggesting that Howard and Wyndham, owners of two of the largest theatres, would not easily be persuaded to bring foreign drama companies to Edinburgh! (Miller, 1996:2-3)

Consequently, Baillie Stevenson remained unconvinced and stood by his fundamental objection that the city could not support a festival that would compete with his own plans for outdoor entertainment and pageantry during the summertime. Fortunately, this parochial and provincial opinion by a small group of officials did not retard the formation of the Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama. Since then, EIF as a multi-cultural stage has been open to leading artists and companies worldwide, and has established its status as one of the major arts festivals in the world. Furthermore, it also promotes the city of Edinburgh as the Capital of Festivals.

As the major receiver of public funding from the Arts Council and local authorities, EIF has throughout its history made a cultural transition of its own

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<sup>6</sup> Sir John Ireland Falconer was Lord Provost of Edinburgh between 1944 and 1947.

<sup>7</sup> Henry Harvey Wood (1903-1977), was the Scottish representative of the British Council.

accord, and has played a very important role as an interpreter of cultural diversity and exchange. However, one of the considerations in this thesis is whether EIF truly represents diverse cultures in its programme or whether the programme only reflects the culture of Europe and North America.

In addition, based on EIF's mission statement, EIF is meant to be 'the most exciting, innovative and accessible Festival of the performing arts in the world, and thus promote the cultural, educational and economic well-being of the people of Edinburgh and Scotland.' All these goals are to be achieved through: 'Presenting arts of the highest possible international standard to the widest possible audience;' 'Reflecting international culture in presentations to Scottish audiences and reflecting Scottish culture in presentations to international audiences;' 'Presenting events which cannot easily be achieved by any other UK arts organization through innovative programming and commitment to new work;' 'Actively ensuring equal opportunities for all sections of the Scottish and wider public to experience and enjoy the Festival' and 'Encouraging public participation in the arts throughout the year by collaborating with other arts and festival organizations.'<sup>8</sup>

Here, we can see that EIF's mission statement holds at its core an implied cultural diversity and international exchange. Whether or not this mission ensures that the composition of the programme reflects a multicultural aspect within EIF's exact programming policy needs to be further explored.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.eif.co.uk/G41\\_Aims\\_and\\_Objectives.php](http://www.eif.co.uk/G41_Aims_and_Objectives.php)

In fact, as such an influential cultural event, it is surprising that the EIF was not included in Femi Folorunso's statement mentioned in Chapter 1,<sup>9</sup> along with Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Edinburgh Mela, the Scottish Indian Arts Forum and the Glasgow-based Scottish Academy of Asian Arts. In order to answer this question of diversity, there is a need to discuss some circumstances in detail through investigating the programming policy of Edinburgh International Festival and the operation behind such an important international cultural event.

## **2.2 Programming Policy at the EIF**

John Drummond, EIF's Festival Director between 1979 and 1983, describes the EIF spirit as one of 'reconciliation, brotherhood and humanity.' He says, 'It was about the Arts as a touchstone of the human spirit...The Arts represent a regular demonstration of the highest potential of the human spirit.' (Drummond, 1981:2) This spirit recognised by Drummond was facing a radical resistance by Baillie Stevenson, as mentioned before. Nevertheless, in 1947, the city of Edinburgh decided to turn away from necessary, more mundane municipal developments and concentrate instead on building the Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama (EIF). The creation of such a festival in Edinburgh would have been remarkable at any time. To do so in the midst of the austerity of the immediate post-war years was an astonishing act of faith. As Edwin Francis

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<sup>9</sup> See page 8

Catford describes in *EDINBURGH – The story of a city* (1975), Lord Provost of the day, Sir John Falconer, eagerly accepted the idea and pursued it with vigour against all doubts and criticisms, insisting that only the highest standards of performance would suffice. In the words of former Lord Provost, Eric Milligan, Chairman of the 2002 Festival, 'We have all been united in the view that the one thing we cannot do is compromise the "quality" of artistic excellence' (*The Scotsman*, 15 February 2002, p.14). In response to this point, James Waters expressed in an interview with the author of this thesis that the only criterion employed in programming is 'quality'.<sup>10</sup> The Edinburgh International Festival in its mission statement set about 'presenting arts of the highest possible international standard'<sup>11</sup> and established its reputation and iconic status as the leading arts festival in the world.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the first sentence in the article *Planning a Festival*<sup>12</sup> is 'The 1994 Edinburgh International Festival programme comes to you courtesy of – gossip.' (Lockerbie, 1994:4) In this article, the writer Catherine Lockerbie talks to Brian McMaster and James Waters about the pitfalls of planning an international festival. As it turns out, many productions may be invited as yet unseen – as was the case with most of the 1994 drama programme. Lockerbie writes, 'The gossip network says something is good, very good; but where is the proof? This can lead to tantalising moments of tension, not to say near-disaster.' (Lockerbie, 1994:4-5) In the words of McMaster

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<sup>10</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with James Waters, Edinburgh, 20 October 2003, n.p.

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.eif.co.uk/G41\\_Aims\\_and\\_Objectives.php](http://www.eif.co.uk/G41_Aims_and_Objectives.php)

himself, 'Programming is all educated guesswork.' (Lockerbie, 1994:5) Accordingly, gossip networking apparently has a part to play in EIF's programming policy.

Ross proposes in *The Marketing of Culture: An Evaluation of the Marketing of the Edinburgh International Festival* (1996) that there are no official criteria for programming in the Edinburgh International Festival. Festival acts are selected according to the judgment of the Festival Director and Chief Executive, i.e. according to McMaster's personal preference. Apart from the concerns about 'quality' and the 'gossip network', the programming policy at EIF, as this thesis suggests, has also been influenced by political and financial concerns as well as by personal experience and preference.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, EIF programming strategy between 1947 and 2000 is divided into three stages and will be explored in the following three subsections titled 'The Frank Dunlop Dynasty,' 'The John Drummond and Brian McMaster Regimes' and 'The Sovereignities since 1947.'<sup>13</sup> Frank Dunlop was the most significant innovator of EIF's history, in terms of altering the programming policy to meet the mission of EIF as an intercultural platform. Further, he nominated the Ninagawa and Kunju productions of *Macbeth* for inclusion at EIF. Therefore, his tenure provides the major focus for this thesis

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<sup>12</sup> Published in the 1994 edition of the *Edinburgh International Festival Magazine*.

<sup>13</sup> This study on EIF's programming policy concludes in the year 2000 in which Brian McMaster is still Director; McMaster's tenure ended with the 2006 Festival. The reason for selecting the period between 1947 and 2000 for this research has been explained in the Chapter 1 Introduction.

and is discussed for the entirety of the next subsection. This thesis further tries to make a comparison between Frank Dunlop and the two directors of the EIF before and after him, for the purpose of identifying the interaction and influence between them; thus, the second subsection will examine the programming strategy within 'The John Drummond and Brian McMaster Regimes.' Moreover, the development of the EIF reflects the varied events and situations in the world. From a macro-historical perspective and for the validity of this research, it has been necessary to investigate whether there has been any consideration given to political or financial concerns with regard to programming policy preferences amongst all the Festival Directors. Accordingly, the third stage will explore programming strategy for each Festival Director (1947-2000), particularly studying the directors Rudolf Bing, Ian Hunter, Robert Ponsonby, Lord Harewood and Peter Diamand. It has also been necessary to examine the application of EIF's programming strategy to foreign companies other than the Chinese and Japanese groups primarily discussed in this thesis in order to truly identify that strategy as a whole. The result of this exploration, with regards to the meaning of 'international' in the view of the Festival's directors, will be analysed in Chapter 5 under the title of Theoretical Analysis.

### **2.2.1 The Frank Dunlop Dynasty**

'The Festival should be for everybody.' This philosophy was insisted upon by Frank Dunlop in his interview with the Festival Council for the post of Festival



Director of the EIF. He also claimed that the Festival was not getting through to ordinary people, who regarded it as being too esoteric and 'not for them.' (Miller, 1996:114) This statement shows Dunlop's priority to popularise the Festival throughout his directorship.

According to Eileen Miller in *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996* (1996), while the Festival Council was considering Dunlop for the post, some members of the establishment felt that his potential appointment as the new Festival director might not be entirely appropriate, and they lobbied against him. As a result, the Lord Provost claimed that the appointment of Dunlop as the new Director should not be regarded as a change in policy in relation to future festivals: not only would the high-standard of music be maintained as it had for years, but drama would also play a particularly exciting part.

It was this significant moment that the Festival first had a theatre professional as its Director. As the successor of John Drummond, Dunlop's programming policy was always controversial. Although he inherited Drummond's enthusiasm for popularising the festival's content in favour of the general public's taste, Dunlop also switched the emphasis of the Festival from music to theatre, despite the Lord Provost's declaration that Dunlop's appointment would not shift programming policy. Since a mission statement is open to interpretation, Frank Dunlop's dramatic shift in programming policy at EIF, despite being radical, conformed closely to the Festival's stated goals.<sup>14</sup> Before Dunlop became the

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.eif.co.uk/G41\\_Aims\\_and\\_Objectives.php](http://www.eif.co.uk/G41_Aims_and_Objectives.php)

Festival Director, his theatre works had already been presented on EIF's stages eight times between 1960 and 1982. Despite his previous EIF experience, enthusiasm and desire to turn the Festival into a truly international cultural event, Frank Dunlop's programming strategy was still hampered by several factors explored below.

### **Political Concerns**

As a quotation from Stanley Waterman's *Carnivals for Elites: The Cultural Politics of Arts Festivals* (1998), Alessandro Falassi states:

A festival is a periodically recurrent, social occasion in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of co-ordinated events, there participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all the members of a whole community, unite by ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a world view. (p.57)

Falassi's definition can be applied to international festivals, such as EIF. Accordingly, an international festival should embrace the ideals and respect the values of world communities. Therefore, global political concerns are among the realities that drive the Festival Director's programme selection.

This awareness of the political climate also gained support from Owen Dudley Edwards in his *Goodbye to All That* (1991):

What the Festival Director needs even more than thorough planning is a capacity for improvisation when international events or private misfortunes cause sudden cancellations. The Festival is a human event, and a smoothly running machine is in much more danger of breakdown from the human factor than is an agile and resourceful mind with a sense of occasion. (p.56)

A successful festival on the scale of the EIF must be planned several years ahead. Nevertheless, Edwards' 'capacity for improvisation' is necessary for success if the changing circumstances of the world are to be dealt with. Consequently, if political events are as relevant to Festival programming as more mundane production elements such as venue arrangement, EIF's identity as an elitist or populist event reflects a political ideology.

As David Chaney states in '*Cosmopolitan Art and Cultural Citizenship*' in *Theory, Culture & Society* (2002), in the last quarter of the twentieth century, the dominance of an elite culture was heavily attacked by right-wing thinkers and policy-makers, who argued that cultural provision should be as governed by market forces as any other form of public service. As socially privileged groups dominate consumption of cultural goods, one of the central tenets of this critique has been that, in particular, to the advantage of the better-educated and better-off and those dispensing public subsidies have shifted resources. Moreover, the critique has not been limited to the right, as Bennett et al. summarized Bourdieu's views:

Viewed in this light, the public subsidy of such institutions, far from delivering a general benefit to all, delivers a selective benefit of distinction to those who are equipped, by their social and educational formation, to make use of them. (Chaney, 2002:162)

Aligning with Chaney and acting on his own argument that 'the Festival should be for everybody', Frank Dunlop was devoted to making the Festival programme more popular. This effort was inspired by pressure from local authorities as well

as his personal beliefs. . Despite nearly forty years of steady development and EIF's leading position among world cultural events, the Festival has been criticised on a number of issues over the years; chief among these issues is EIF's alleged 'cultural elitism.' Owen Dudley Edwards expresses in *The Middle Man* (1985) how the political climate changed in 1985 when Labour took a majority of seats on the Midlothian Regional Council. This brought a funding crisis in the Festival as Labour complained about its 'elitist' approach to programming, and demanded the Festival serve 'the people at large, in terms that they would understand and desire' (p.28-30). Besides, there had been increasing dissatisfaction in the media. which questioned the Government's spending of great amounts of public money to support an 'elite' festival offering only 'high-brow' programmes.

In response to this accusation, Frank Dunlop told *The List* that one of his first goals for the Festival was to 'popularise' it. (Dibdin, 1991:17) He agreed that the Labour Party was right to bring out the problem of 'elitism,' but he argued it was no longer a question of the Festival direction being elitist. In fact, it was not at all that the Festival was elitist, but that it was perceived as being so. The Festival did not see itself as catering only to one interest group, economic section or social clique.

By consistently using the Festival as a tool to reach ordinary people, Frank Dunlop's third Festival was indeed popularised. In addition to the community events in Pilrig Park and various centres throughout the city, Dunlop also programmed several populist entertainments in formal venues, such as

American jugglers at the King's Theatre (which used to be the home of the Festival's operas and is now a chief venue for the Festival's drama programme), jazz concerts at the Usher Hall (usually the home of the Festival's concerts), Scottish humour at the Lyceum and Leith Theatres (previously the home of the Festival's dramas) and the Chinese Magical Circus at the Playhouse (the home of the Festival's dances).

Moreover, Dunlop's ideas about opera were a great deal different from Peter Diamand's, who preferred to programme grand, star-studded events featuring performers such as Placido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti. Dunlop was eager to take every chance to make opera more accessible and popular. In order to widen the appeal of opera and prove it did not necessarily need to be 'elitist,' Dunlop introduced the Folk Opera of Stockholm's renowned adaptation of *Aida* to Leith Theatre. According to Miller, in *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996* (1996), when the audience walked into the lobby, a taste of the forthcoming show was given by groups of singers wandering around in costume. The auditorium was transformed by a large platform stage thrust deep into the hall bringing the action into the audience and making them a part of it, as dancers, singers and priests holding flaming torches gradually went down the aisles. There were no stars in this show. The major roles were rotated in the company, so that the actress playing one evening's *Aida* would be singing in the chorus for the next performance.

Unfortunately, Dunlop's attempt to make the Festival more accessible for ordinary people did not please the critics. In Miller's opinion, apart from Ninagawa's spectacular and visually thrilling *Tempest*, the 1988 theatre programme seemed more like an example of popular entertainment than a serious World Theatre Season. For example, there were two productions from France, the first one was the production of Marivaux's *Le Jeu de L'amour et du Hasard* by the Group TSE, performed in monkey masks. The second one was a 'geriatric vaudeville' *Les Petits Pas* from the Compagnie Jérôme Deschamps. The critics were not impressed and questioned, in their articles, the future of the Festival in the light of the stingy and anti-elitist prejudice of Edinburgh District Council.

Apart from the argument surrounding the Festival's identity in terms of elitism versus populism under his direction, Frank Dunlop needed to deal with unexpected challenges from other political/ideological attitudes to his programme. For instance, as Eileen Miller stated in her *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996*, the first row concerned the Glenlivet Fireworks concert which was supposedly a happy event but somehow Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1' was performed. It upset a large number of the participating crowd who expected the tune of 'Land of Hope and Glory', so they booed and jeered. The Scottish National Party took up the cause, describing the playing of the tune as 'offensive to the vast majority of Scots,' and in a letter to Dunlop the Secretary complained that the tune had been hijacked by the Tory party as their semi-official anthem and had been used for celebrating the worst

sort of 'English imperialism'. Since the Glenlivet event was entirely organized by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Society left the orchestra to answer the criticisms. But, when challenged, the Orchestra's manager said:

I think there has been an over-sensitive reaction to this. The pieces are chosen because they are good music and because they are perfect companions to fireworks. No one has objected to Handel's music written for English royal occasions. (Miller, 1996:130)

Also, Frank Dunlop most unwillingly had to cancel the visit of the Bolshoi Opera from Moscow because of the influence of the 1991 coup in Moscow. As Miller (1996) states, because of the warm friendship that had been built between the Soviet authorities and the Festival Society, Dunlop had a successful negotiation with getting the company on the plane, the only aircraft being allowed out of Moscow were the chartered planes transporting the Bolshoi Company to Edinburgh.<sup>15</sup>

The shortage of qualified venues to host first-rate world artists and companies in Edinburgh has persecuted the Edinburgh International Festival's Directors since 1947. Fortunately, in 1985, the Festival Director was at last able to freely select his opera programme thanks to the reopening of the King's Theatre after its £1.5 million face-lift, which included a new orchestra pit capable of accommodating one hundred musicians. Miller describes how Dunlop soon invited the renowned Opera de Lyon and its English conductor, John Eliot Gardiner, to present two significant productions, *L'Etoile* and *Pelléas et Mélisande*, for the EIF audience.

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<sup>15</sup> p.136

Although Frank Dunlop was honoured to have this auspicious, improved theatre, all of his predecessors were constrained by Edinburgh's primitive and pricey venues. This issue will be addressed in detail in the sections on the John Drummond and Brian McMaster Regimes and The Sovereignities since 1947.

### **Financial Concerns**

Since the Festival was formed, financial stringency has always been an issue for the Directors as they struggle to maintain EIF's scale and artistic quality. Eileen Miller observes in *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996* (1996) that in 1986, for the first time, the Festival Director was able to plan ahead without worrying whether or not there would be sufficient money to honour contracts. This was because, after the Festival Society's forty years of appeals for funds, the Edinburgh District Council and the Scottish Arts Council finally made a definite commitment, guaranteeing funding over a three-year period to the Festival beginning in 1986. Lothian Region had shown an increasing interest in renewing its support for the Festival; more than that, an endowment fund had been set up with Sir Thomas Risk and Professor Jack Shaw as the main trustees. The aim was to raise £10 million, and the fund quickly reached £700,000 through the help of Sir Risk. When the sponsorship had reached a figure of £550,000, the Festival considered itself in a reasonably stable financial situation. Frank Dunlop was then able to spend more money on programming large musical productions such as operas, and to invite the calibre of stars who had been absent from the previous few Festivals.



Back in 1984, when Dunlop was appointed as the Festival Director, the legacy from John Drummond was a deficit of £175,500 -- the largest deficit on record. Under this handicap, Dunlop's first Festival in 1984 was to create a mini-festival of the work of Samuel Beckett under the Festival's drama programme, including an eleven-day programme of talks, discussions, films and closed-circuit television. From Miller's point of view, it was a complete innovation for the Festival. Dunlop approached American philanthropist and art collector Dr. Arthur M. Sackler to come and assist him. Through Sackler's efforts, the visual arts became a more important element in the Festival. Finally, with £200,000 of commercial sponsorship and more than \$1million donated by Americans for the Smithsonian Institution's exhibition, the 1984 Festival achieved a surplus of £75,000, and the Society experienced great relief after its horrendous deficit from the previous year.

That the programming policy was influenced by financial concerns in Dunlop's tenure is also illustrated in the facts of self-funding and cooperation as well as by programme cancellations. In the matter of self-funding, as the budget was still tight in 1986, Dunlop accepted an offer from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, which had subsidized itself as Orchestra-in-Residence. In view of budget restrictions going into his fourth Festival, Dunlop successfully negotiated with two London management companies to take some Festival events after the Edinburgh performances, so the costs of these events could be shared. Furthermore, in that Spanish subjects became the main theme in the 1989 festival, the Spanish Government sent more than four hundred musicians,

dancers and actors to Edinburgh – one of the largest contingents ever sent to the Festival. In addition, when Dunlop learnt Glasgow was facing financial problems inviting the Bolshoi Company from Moscow as part of its 1990 City of Culture celebrations, Dunlop soon made an offer to take over Prokofiev's *Betrothal* and share the costs with Glasgow.

Another reality in association with financial difficulties for the Festival Directors was programme cancellation. Although Dunlop seriously attempted to eliminate local citizens' animosity, he was forced to cancel some of the popular events of the 1987 Festival under financial strain, which was increased by the District Council's being unwilling to offer any additional grant. Some cancellations were even more significant, considering Dunlop's idea that each year has a major theme in its programme. Miller mentioned in *The Edinburgh International Festival 1947-1996*:

Plans were in motion for an Italian Festival in 1988 with a visit by the San Carlo, which was celebrating its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary, as the main feature. When the company increased its fee and asked for two or three times the amount agreed, Dunlop went to Italy and suggested various ways in which the expenses could be reduced but, despite the intervention of the Italian Government who were subsidizing the company, it refused and without an increase in grant Dunlop was forced to cancel the visit. (pp.126-127)

Another major challenge due to financial arguments occurred in the 1991 festival: the cancellation of *Peter Pan* four weeks before the show was scheduled to open. Though the cancelled piece was replaced by Tom Fleming's production of *The Thrie Estaites*, the original programme brochure remained in circulation, causing enormous confusion. As the result of this situation, the box

office takings of *The Thrie Estaites* were not successful. Two other major shows also came to grief at the last moment, one of which, *Lady Chatterley on Trial*, had to be cancelled for financial reasons. The above examples demonstrate the extent to which the Director has to negotiate cancellation or cooperation with other organisations simply to balance finances.

In his last tour of duty, Dunlop was finally able to present one of the strongest music programmes for many years with the help of extensive financial aid. With increased grants of around £50,000 each from both the Edinburgh District Council and the Scottish Arts Council, and large increases in sponsorship, the Scottish Opera returned with a new production of Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*; the Bolshoi Opera and the Kirov Opera presented *Christmas Eve* by Rimsky-Korsakov and *Khovanshchina* by Mussorgsky. The orchestras included the Czech Philharmonic, the Philharmonia, and the Royal Scottish Orchestra. The music programme was further enhanced by a substantial series of recitals. This was the first time in Dunlop's years that the music programme had received enthusiastic feedback from critics.

### **Personal Expertise and Preference**

The former Lords Provost of Edinburgh, Sir John Ireland Falconer and Eric Milligan as well as EIF's former Associate Director James Waters all insisted that quality was the only criterion of programme selection. Based on all the evidence, however, personal expertise and preference were major concerns that interacted with political and financial concerns as significant criteria of

programming policy during the Dunlop dynasty.

Dunlop started his career in Edinburgh as a performer on the Fringe. The very best work of this outstanding Festival Director was influenced by the tradition of adventure, improvisation and freedom to be found there. Dunlop's background as a theatre director and his spirit towards creative works involved adventure and freedom. These features formed his personal expertise and preferences, which were reflected in his programming policy. This reflection also made his festivals distinct from those of other Directors. Two prominent features of programmes during his leadership were the enhancement of the 'Festival Theme', which had been created by Lord Harewood and expanded by John Drummond; and the establishment of the 'World Theatre Season'. His thematic arrangements and 'World Theatre Season' were fine demonstrations that the EIF provided a stage freely open to the performing arts worldwide.

On the points of making thematic arrangements, Frank Dunlop presented a 'Samuel Beckett Season' in 1984. This event was concluded by a series of dramas, speeches, discussions, films and television programmes, which, according to Eileen Miller, was seen as an entirely new innovation. In the 1985 Festival, he chose the theme of 'Auld Alliance,' presenting the artistic views of France and Scotland's long relationship. For example, Chabrier's *L'étoile*, Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande* by Opera de Lyon and Charpentier's *Acteon* and Rameau's *Anacreon* by Les Arts Florissants were representative of French opera. Orchestral and chamber concerts were presented by the Orchestre National de France, Les Arts Florissants, the Orchestra de Paris and Via Nova

Quartet in contrast with the local companies of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, St. Mary's Music School Orchestra, the Scottish National Orchestra and the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland. Moliere's *Le Misanthrope* by Theatre National de Belgique and Hugo's *Angelo, Tyran de Padoue* by La Compagnie Renaud-Barrault represented French theatre, and the Lyons Opera Ballet was also introduced to Edinburgh. In contrast, Edinburgh International Festival presented Tom Fleming's *The Thrie Estaites* and Sydney Goodsir Smith's *The Wallace* in association with the Scottish Theatre Company as an illustration of Scottish theatre.

There was a Russian theme for the 1987 Festival, as part of the celebrations for the seventieth anniversary of Russia's 1917 October Revolution. Because of the shortage of adequate facilities, Dunlop was only able to bring the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, the Bolshoi Sextet, and the Shostakovich Quartet for the music programme. Russian theatre was represented by the Gorky Theatre of Leningrad in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* and the Tbilisi State Puppet Theatre. A dance programme was put on by Siverko of a hundred-strong group of folk-dancers and musicians from Archangel. The Museum of Oriental Arts in Moscow organised an exhibition entitled *Tbilisi to Tashkent*. As the result of full support from the Soviet authorities, the Russian government sent a large number of writers, directors, critics and political commentators to take part in a four-day symposium on literature and the performances.

In the festival of 1989, the theme was Spanish culture. Complementing the

National Opera of Spain was the so-called elite Teatro De La Zarzuela in Madrid, which presented Moreno Torroba's three-act *La Chulapona* – purported to be the first complete performance of a *zarzuela* to be given in Britain. Besides, the National Orchestra of Spain directed by Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, performed native composer Falla's *Atlántida* and *La Vida Breve*. As to dance performances, the Spanish National Ballet provided classical Spanish ballet and the Cristina Hoyos Company, flamenco dancing. One of the most interesting Spanish companies was Els Comediantes, a group of street entertainers; they performed *Dimonis* on the grounds of George Heriot's School and *La Nit* at the Lyceum Theatre.

Although some people questioned whether the Spanish focus in the Festival might be insufficiently representative, it was popular with the public - especially in its musical aspect. John Clifford wrote in *Scotland on Sunday* (20 August 1989):

It would be an understatement to describe what they achieved as amazing. It surpassed that wildest collection of extravagant superlatives you could ever imagine. They filled the air with screaming banshees. They had the battlements bathed in flares. They made the whole night vibrate with drums ... And the night after that they did the same to the Lyceum. They covered the audience with a net of silver bells; they hoisted it to the ceiling and transformed it into a starry sky. And at the end, with a characteristic playful tenderness they tucked the moon to bed before the coming of the dawn. (p.31)

Clifford's review is again representative of Dunlop's efforts to make the Festival for ordinary people to enjoy, rather than for the appreciation of an elite audience. In Dunlop's vision, the Festival 'should be for everybody' and this notion was

truly reflected in his selection of programmes, by popularising the performances for any audience member's imagination and satisfaction - as Els Comediants did – and receiving positive feedback from the arguably 'elitist' critics at the same time.

In the 1990 programme, Frank Dunlop shifted the theme to the Pacific Region. This time, the Festival focused on the arts and culture of the countries from the Pacific Rim with companies from Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and California. For instance: the *Story of Ch'unhyang* presented by the Korean National Theatre and Dance Company; *The Great Doctor Yabuhara* by the Chijinkai Theatre, *Sotoba Komachi* by the Ninagawa Company and *Half Gods (Hanshin)* by Yume No Yuminsha Company from Japan; *Hedda Gabler* by Downstage Theatre Company from New Zealand; *Greek Tragedy* by Belvoir Street Theatre from Australia, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Cleveland San Jose Ballet from California. The Festival also emphasized another subject that year. Dunlop organised the most comprehensive review of Martinů's works ever heard in the UK in celebration of the centenary of the composer's birth. Works included the two operas *The Greek Passion*, presented by the Prague Symphony Orchestra, and *Julietta*, presented by the Slovak National Opera and Ballet.

Despite the fact that Dunlop did not make any official announcements regarding the theme for 1991, his final year, the programme heavily featured the Soviet Union, which collapsed in the August coup of that year. and included the Bolshoi Opera and the Lenkom Theatre from Moscow; the Kirov Opera and the Kirov

Chamber Ensemble from Leningrad; the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Czech Nonet, and the National Theatre of Martin from Czechoslovakia; the National Theatre of Craiova from Romania; the Open Theatre of Belgrade from Serbia as well as Teatr Ekspresji from Poland.

In addition to thematic programming, Dunlop's other innovative idea was the creation of the World Theatre Season in 1986. Despite there having been many foreign dramas introduced to Edinburgh during John Drummond's tenure, Frank Dunlop expanded their number and covered different cultures from far corners of the world. This innovation complemented each Festival's theme and reached the significant achievement that more and more companies from as far away as Asia were introduced to Edinburgh. Among the Japanese companies and plays, Ninagawa's works most caught the audience's attention. After his triumphal productions of *Macbeth* in 1985, his *Medea*, *The Tempest*, *Sotoba Komachi* (*Mishima*) *Sekidera Komachi*, and *Tango at the End of Winter* were re-staged in Edinburgh in 1986, 1988, 1990 and 1991 respectively. In Dunlop's tenure, there were more Japanese companies attending the Festival, such as Takeda Marionette Theatre in 1986, Yumi No Yuminsha Company in 1987 and 1990, Matsuyama Ballet in 1988, Yokohama Boat Theatre in 1989, Chijinkai Theatre Company and Stomu Yamash'Ta in 1990. As for the companies from China, the Chinese Magical Circus participated in 1986, the Shanghai Kunju Theatre presented the elaborately staged, visually expressive shows *The Peony Pavilion* and *The Woman Warrior* and the Kunju *Macbeth* also put in an appearance and Kunju *Macbeth* is also one of two productions this thesis will discuss later on; in



1987 the Xi'an Singing and Dance Company presented *The Soul of the Terracotta Army*. Companies from Korea were the Korean National Theatre and Dance Company in 1990 and Samulnori in 1991. From India, there came the Kathakali Theatre in 1990.

As a theatre director, the most outstanding achievement in Frank Dunlop's tenure was the establishment of the first World Theatre Season in 1986. With it, Dunlop more than fulfilled his pledge to restore the balance of the Festival from its former heavy emphasis on music and opera.<sup>16</sup> Under Dunlop's guidance, in 1986, companies from Poland, France, Germany, Sweden, Spain, South Africa, the USA, and Japan presented eleven productions, which made it the most ambitious drama programme that the Festival had ever had. With this wide-ranging programme, Frank Dunlop opened up the arts for the general public, and gained most critics' approval. As Allen Wright observed in *The Scotsman* (30 August, 1986):

Edinburgh has seen the light. Its 40<sup>th</sup> International Festival has not merely paid its respects to Scottish Enlightenment but it has revived that spirit of adventure and breadth of outlook. Many risks have been taken by the Festival's promoters whose enterprise has been rewarded, if not financially, then at least artistically in the case of productions like *Medea*, *Aida* and *Oberon*. (p.6)

Although not all of these plays were successful, two of the productions were received with particular acclaim from the critics. *Yerma*, Victor Garcia's Spanish production, had been considered one of the landmarks of European drama

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<sup>16</sup> This will be identified in the following sub-sections, with further analysis to be carried out in Chapter 5.

when it was first been presented in Spain. Likewise, Yukio Ninagawa's return with Euripides' *Medea* received compliments from the critics, who had exhausted their superlative adjectives and described it as one of the truly unique experiences in any Festival.

Regarding Ninagawa's *Medea*, Frank Dunlop seemed quite mad when he announced he would present late-night Greek tragedy outdoors on a chilly Edinburgh night. However, the courtyard of Robert Adam's Old College was truly an ideal setting for Ninagawa's talent even with weather conditions of teeming rain and a howling east wind. The result was, according to John Peter in the *Sunday Times* (31 August 1986):

The most magnificent production of a Greek play I've ever seen ... a visual and intellectual spectacular which conveyed both the lyricism and the ferocity of Euripides's imagination...In all my theatre-going life I can remember few moments of such truthful magnificence. (p.42)

Apart from popularising the programme for ordinary people to experience, Dunlop also desired to put on more adventurous material at the Usher Hall. Previous directors had taken responsibility to fill it every night with traditional standard symphony concerts, but Dunlop wanted to do something more out of the ordinary in this venue. Frank Dunlop came up with his first divergence in 1985, with Nureyev dancing to the music of Bach, which met with hostility from certain music critics. Nevertheless, Dunlop invited two of the stars from the National Ballet of Canada, Karen Kain and Peter Ottmann, without constraints, to perform with the Toronto Symphony Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, which

was a performance that earned applause from dance critics with much more enthusiasm than that for the major ballet events at the Playhouse.

Thom Dibdin<sup>17</sup> accused Dunlop's programming of a sort of 'cultural supermarket shopping' that merely selected already-prominent companies from around the world, even for the Fringe. Dibdin's criticism is a significant consideration. Since the selection of the programme of the EIF is conducted mainly by the Festival Director with the assistance of his colleagues; with the huge demand of performances in each year's programme, and with only a few of the potentially thousands of foreign companies able to achieve an invitation, it is not surprising that people question the selection process of those performances as coming from impresario packages for inclusion in a cultural supermarket. In response to Dibdin's question, Dunlop explained:

That is a real danger but it is one I have tried to avoid. I have actually been very unpopular with the international touring circuit for the festivals because I have refused to be influenced by the impresarios who take things round. This should be a place where you discover things, not where you see everything that is on tour. (Dibdin, 1991:17)

Ironically, Frank Dunlop's attitude towards arts impresarios mentioned above neglects to account for financial constrictions. Dunlop did try to create a Festival where the audience receives fresh experiences. However, through the examination of financial concerns, this thesis would argue that Dunlop's ideal had to face the reality of financial limitation in which he still needed to select a programme that included self-funding companies as well as cooperating with

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<sup>17</sup> *The List*, Issue 156, 23 to 29 August. Edinburgh: The List Ltd.

other organisations and even impresarios.

Undoubtedly, Frank Dunlop's innovations such as the Festival Theme and the World Theatre Season truly shifted the programming direction far away from that of all his predecessors, not only modifying the emphasis from music to theatre, but also embracing diverse cultures by introducing world theatre to Edinburgh. As a successful theatre director, Dunlop created a popular and diverse festival through his personal expertise and preferences. This characteristic programme was welcomed by the public, but not by most music critics.

From his first Festival, the music programme was a target for critics. In 1987, Conrad Wilson, the music critic of the *Scotsman*, grasped every opportunity to complain about the howlers in the programmes and the unhelpful notes. There was more justification for the criticism of the music programme concerning an absence of top-class international stars, a lack of contemporary music and thoughtless planning in the 1988 festival.

Regarding the controversial relationship between Dunlop and critics, Owen Dudley Edwards raised a point in *Goodbye to All That* (1991):

Why did London hate Dunlop so much? In part because he caught the mood of an awakening Scotland and increased the Festival's Edinburgh identity which challenges London's notion of the Festival as its plaything in Summer camp. (p.56)

Reducing the influence of the London orchestras on the Festival was one of the intentions that Dunlop stated publicly. He saw no reason why they had to bring irrelevant South Bank programmes to Edinburgh and, at the same time, charge

an exorbitant price to do so. He had reduced their contribution to four concerts in 1985. In 1986 there was only one, by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Pritchard, plus two by Neville Marriner's Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Instead, he invited Simon Rattle's City of Birmingham Orchestra to give two concerts and also the Halle to perform one with its new conductor Stanislaw Skrowaczewsky. The Toronto Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra under its young conductor Mariss Jansons, the Moscow Virtuosi and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe conducted by Abbado gave Festival visitors an unforgettable experience. From Dunlop's point of view, the advantage of these arrangements showed that Edinburgh had the ability to present its own special kind of goods, rather than repeating a performance planned for the Proms.

With these creative ideas, Dunlop had taken the Festival into a new era. However much in previous years there had been suggestions that the Festival should focus on music more than drama, Dunlop's music programmes were strongly criticized for being unexciting, conservative and lacking in imagination. The music critics were now pushing the case for music being dropped altogether and the Festival becoming fully an event for drama.

Since Frank Dunlop's music programme was always controversial, most of the music critics hated his arrangements. One event started from Dunlop's innovative idea of including some political involvement, but it was soon transferred into a battle between critics and the Festival. As Miller recalled, at a press conference, Dunlop found himself in a trouble when he made a point that Edinburgh might benefit from a closer liaison with Glasgow, as the 1990

European City of Culture. Being immediately questioned about the possibility of the Festival alternating between Edinburgh and Glasgow, he replied that the notion had not been planned but could possibly be worthy of discussion. One Tory District Councillor was so irritated with the idea that he tabled an emergency motion at a council meeting strongly condemning Dunlop as irresponsible. As he considered Dunlop's remarks would bring trouble to the Festival, he ended by advising Dunlop to 'consider his position,' implying resignation. However, the Festival's press officer had claimed that a 'bone-headed London critic' had himself put forward part of these ideas about the Festival's future.<sup>18</sup>

The press, however, immediately fought back. They invited the London music critics, never favourably disposed towards the Festival, to write strict and vitriolic critiques throughout the Festival. Hugh Canning concluded and claimed the main point in the conflict between the press and the Festival in *the Sunday Times* (3 September 1989):

Edinburgh's claim to be a music festival - among other things - of international standing no longer bears too much scrutiny. It has become self-satisfied, complacent and parochial, scarcely worth the five-hour train journey from London ... who is to blame? It would be unjust, I think, to heap it all on to the head of the beleaguered festival director, who has never made any secret of his inexperience in matters musical... It was Dunlop's ideal to downgrade the costly musical content of the festival in favour of the cheaper, more flexible dramatic arts, and most Edinburgh-watchers truly believe in him and his belief. Indeed, then, Dunlop's sixth Festival had brought him triumph since the music programme reached a nadir, which it surely could not sink. If next year Frank Dunlop could not figure out any ideas to conquer the challenge of holding the jamboree

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<sup>18</sup> Miller, 1996:131

concert, a unique music style in Glasgow, the Cultural Capital of Europe, it might be worth thinking of separating these musical events from the Festival to the city where most of Scotland's musical resources concentrate - no doubt thanks to the meanness of the Edinburgh City Fathers. (p.C7)

In Canning's criticism quoted above, there is an issue that should be addressed: whether the programming strategy of the Festival should emphasize its general audiences' taste, considering their contributions towards EIF's financial predicament are of enormous value, or whether the opinions of critics - who only represent a small group of opinions and show no interest at all in the results of the box office takings - should guide those choices. Frank Dunlop's professional background and preference led him to programme a 'popularised-oriented' festival and even to shift its focus to the theatre section. Undoubtedly, his programming policies provoked fierce criticisms by those London critics who preferred that the Festival should be a platform for presenting 'elite' musical programmes rather than 'flexible dramatic arts.' This situation also indicates that most arts critics are prejudiced against unfamiliar disciplines. Faced with forms they are unfamiliar with, critics will not have the opportunity to demonstrate their expertise to their readers, and can therefore decide that, naturally, such unfamiliar forms will be unwelcome to their audience. Applying this kind of logic, Canning recommended Glasgow, and suggested that the EIF release its resources to that city, where musical programmes had been emphasised.



With his theatre background, Frank Dunlop did admit his lack of expert understanding about music programmes in the early years. He expressed his view when interviewed by Thom Dibdin:

In the early years I felt there ought to be enough opera, but I did not know the right people to get a company like the Bolshoi to give up their holidays to come to Edinburgh. I should not have filled the spaces just to conform to what everybody had done before. (Dibdin, 1991:17)

Although his personal expertise and preference in programme direction was not very much in favour of musical production, Dunlop made a statement to correct the error in people's misperceptions of the Festival as well as to answer press complaints:

This is no longer a Festival of blockbusters - I know people are looking for blockbusters because that makes big news. It's more a Festival about discovery and when you are making discoveries you take risks; and when you take risks you sometimes fall on your face and sometimes you have a glorious success ... A legend has grown up in the past few years that because the present incumbent of the hot seat did have a sort of long career in the theatre he must have come in and moved all the money from the music to theatre events. It's untrue. This year at least two-thirds of the available subsidy was used for music and opera. The other third went to drama, dance and all other events including art exhibitions. (Miller, 1996:132)

In his summary of the Festival in 1989, Allen Wright suggested in *The Scotsman* (4 September 1989) that it should probably be left to the Fringe to experiment with any new-style performing art, and that the Festival

...might concentrate on mounting a few blockbusters, or at least major productions on a scale, which Fringe groups cannot afford. That would seem to be more sensible than competing with such an enormous enterprise as the Fringe which, in itself, is the biggest arts festival in the world though I do not believe it could flourish for long without the main Festival as its backbone. (p.10)



According to Owen Dudley Edwards' in *Goodbye to All That* (1991):

In times past the Festival was a smoothly running machine booking opera and music far in advance, and it was condemned as a mausoleum for apotheosis of establishment music, pleasing the converted and giving little challenge to the intellect. (p.56)

Apart from Frank Dunlop's administration, Edwards' statement is very much representative of the state of the musical programme in EIF. Over its history, as this thesis identifies, the Directors have always programmed the 'apotheosis of establishment' musical works by the big name classical composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and Wagner. In order to present those masterpieces in high-quality productions, renowned foreign orchestras with famous artists are invited to Edinburgh. Among them are the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Claudio Abbado, Maria Callas, and Luciano Pavarotti. It is not surprising how Edwards arrives at his conclusion that 'the Festival was a smoothly running machine booking opera and music far in advance.' Such famous companies and artists have to be booked many years ahead; so, if the Directors want to invite them, the arrangements must be made 'far in advance.'

Unfortunately, with his lack of musical knowledge and connections, Frank Dunlop's music programme was never organized on time, making it difficult for him to engage top artists and companies. The erratic funding made this situation even worse and Dunlop still had a hard time gearing himself up to engage opera companies and musicians several years ahead. Nevertheless, he had had lots of experience dealing with last-minute arrangements in the theatre as Owen

Dudley Edwards wrote in *The Men in the Top*: 'The flair for improvisation is vital to a Festival Director; and even more valuable is the capacity to make apparent misfortune the means of salvation.' (1983:10) However, when stern press criticism claimed that the standard of music had deteriorated during his eight years at the helm, some members of the Festival Council were finally convinced and admitted that it was time for a change.

Miller's view was that in spite of the ever-widening gulf between the volatile Frank Dunlop and the District Council, Dunlop was undoubtedly the right Director at the time. In its fifty-year history, Dunlop's period of office coincided with the most difficult political situation that any Director has had to endure. Although some earlier Directors had certainly dealt more diplomatically with the city fathers, it is impossible to imagine their views and policies being politically acceptable to the extremists in power at the time of Dunlop's tenure.

Whether or not Dunlop's ancestors and successors conducted their programming direction, which were reflected on and influenced by Dunlop's unique programming policy in terms of innovation and cultural diversity is the next area to consider. The following section will explore the influence of political and financial concerns as well as the personal expertise and preferences driving programming policy under the John Drummond and Brian McMaster regimes.

### **2.2.2 The John Drummond and Brian McMaster Regimes**

'I think John clearly made a very big move towards cutting the barriers down between the arts. I would like to further that.' (Edwards, 1983:9) This sentence was uttered by Frank Dunlop in an interview with Owen Dudley Edwards in the article *The Men at the Top*. Similar to his successor's outspoken personality, John Drummond's character was active and he was willing to express himself and his ideas to the press, radio or television. However, as Miller explained, Drummond was not always skilful and could be pushy and overly direct in dealing with people who refused to understand his ideas or were obstructive to resolving problems.<sup>19</sup>

Before John Drummond replaced Peter Diamand as the sixth Festival Director, he was the Director of the BBC Proms; he was also in charge of Arts programming on BBC 2 in the seventies and became Controller of BBC Radio 3. Drummond's link with EIF can be traced back as early as 1958. In that year, Robert Ponsonby – the Festival Director at EIF at the time, had offered him a job, but as he found the wage unsatisfactory, Drummond could not afford to accept it, and instead joined the BBC. In fact, up to 1984, Drummond attended nineteen Festivals, and was responsible for the BBC's coverage for several of these.

As Frank Dunlop gleefully chuckled in an interview with Owen Dudley Edwards in the article in *The New Boy* (1991), the press would 'have to make the most of me. They'll never get any off-the-cuff clangers from Brian (McMaster).' (p.57)

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<sup>19</sup> Miller, 1996:98

Actually, when people learnt Brian McMaster was taking over from Frank Dunlop and becoming the eighth Festival Director, they only remembered that McMaster had run the Welsh National Opera for a very long time.

The Edinburgh experience for Brian McMaster started in 1961, when he won a prize which gave him the means to visit the Edinburgh Festival. At that time, McMaster was fascinated by the atmosphere of the Festival as the productions were running for twenty-four hours. According to Owen Dudley Edwards in *The New Boy* (1991), Brian McMaster had never managed to stay in Edinburgh as long as others. Instead, he had gone back again and again delivering the Welsh National Opera to Edinburgh.

Although their personal characters were different, John Drummond and Brian McMaster were both innovators in terms of programming policy in their own right. Their ideas had also been influential to or influenced by Frank Dunlop's strategies. When Drummond he took over the post, the situation at EIF was as Owen Dudley Edwards says in *The Men at the Top* (1983)

...despite some brilliant performances and marvellous moments, one couldn't avoid the feeling that the Festival was running out of steam, even of any sense of direction. It had become an Establishment thing. It carried with it an air of ponderous middle age. If you wanted excitement you were more likely to look for it on the Fringe. All the élan and enthusiasm of the early years had been replaced by smugness and self-satisfaction. (p.8)

As the new Director, Drummond's first and most important achievement was to reverse this situation with his enthusiasm. In addition, he considered that there was a gap between local citizens and the Festival itself, reflected in the local

press which complained about the expensive activities and disruption caused to local citizens' daily lives. In fact, according to the statistics, in and around Edinburgh, loyal, local audiences were expected to purchase at least forty to sixty per cent of the tickets. They attended performances almost everyday even at weekends. However, Drummond realised that the Festival still meant nothing to a great number of people, who would be the ones worth developing.

Sir Brian McMaster, the former Festival Director, also strongly believes that art should be accessible: 'It's what any of us in the arts is about' (Fisher, 1992:8). Even though the EIF mounts extraordinary things, McMaster has said that the Festival 'wants to embrace a wider public' (Morrison, 2000:16-17). In addition, Brian McMaster states in *The Scotsman* (6 Aug 2005) that 'We have got to make sure we offer an experience here that you can't get anywhere else.' (p.12) McMaster's philosophy towards the Festival is simple. As he said to Richard Morrison, the Festival can do things which are unavailable in other places and also has the obligation to do them.<sup>20</sup> A theatre critic, Mark Fisher, described Brian McMaster's programming feature in his first run:

His programme falls awkwardly between the kind of exotic rarity of Dunlop's line-ups (you may never have heard of the National Theatre of Craiova, but you were intrigued) and the immediate accessibility of a well-known name. (1992:8)

In spite of that, Drummond and McMaster's festivals were distinct and clearly influenced by their personal tastes. However, having examined all the realities which Dunlop had to consider when planning his Festival, what were the realities

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<sup>20</sup> Morrison, 2000:16

that influenced Drummond's and McMaster's programming policies?

### **Political Concerns**

In order to involve ordinary people and reduce the tension between local citizens and the Festival, Drummond created some new programmes for his first Festival. For example, he programmed talk shows, lectures and after-dinner speeches, trying to make people more receptive to the Festival. The reason that he was trying to bridge the gap was not only to intrigue people about the Festival, but also to create a secure investment environment for the people with a financial stake in it.

In his attempts for the EIF to further approach Edinburgh citizens and enlarge the festival experience, John Drummond introduced more street events such as the medieval art of flag-throwing by a group named I Sbandieratori from Italy. Another example of such popularisation was the introduction of a late-night concert in the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens. The *Music for the Royal Fireworks* concert was performed to the accompaniment of a barrage of fireworks exploding from the Castle; this event has carried on until today, and has become the major concluding event for the Festival.

Meanwhile, there were complaints about programmes lacking in home-grown theatre. In fact, the proportion of Scottish representation at the EIF has been a critical issue since the beginning of the Festival. As Eileen Miller observed in

*The Edinburgh International Festival 1947 – 1996*, the lasting complaint about the lack of Scottish representation at the Festival was raised yet again at the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 22 February 1983. Drummond promised that there would be a strong Scottish presence at the 1983 Festival. Because of that promise and because Drummond was himself a Scot, he realized that the Festival should involve itself in Scotland and Scottish life, and so decided to produce more Scottish events.

As the result of this consideration, Scottish drama accounted for forty-percent of Festival programming that year.<sup>21</sup> This was in contrast with zero Scottish drama representation in the 1982 Festival. With John Drummond's championship of Scottish companies, artists and particularly poetry and prose recitals such as the *Dualchas* series on Gaelic culture, he was the first Director to give Scottish arts and culture a truly prominent place in the Festival.

Brian McMaster seems to have had another strategy with regards to the inclusion of Scottish productions. As this thesis has mentioned, his idea was that when foreign productions were a rarity in Britain previously, he had wanted to bring in more foreign programmes. Now that foreign theatre had become more popular in the UK, McMaster wanted to involve more Scottish programmes in the Festival.

Similar to John Drummond's, Brian McMaster's first Festival put the emphasis on the Scottish theme, with a series of concerts devoted to Scottish classical

music through the centuries and Cecil Philip Taylor's seven plays. Despite his enthusiasm to bring Scottish culture onto the world stage, this attitude was not embraced by some of critics. Waldemar Januszczak who was an arts editor for Channel 4, wrote in the *Guardian*, Festival Supplement (1992), describing the emphasis on the Scottish theme as 'misplaced nationalism.' He went on to say that:

Edinburgh first gained its reputation as the greatest arts festival in the world not by rescuing obscure Scotsmen from well-deserved obscurity, but by bringing the best international art and theatre to Britain...I shall miss Edinburgh but I am simply not interested in witnessing one more stage of its horrible and relentless and, yes, tragic transformation into a minor, local event.

The relationship between the Festival's critics (especially from London) and the Festival itself was always a problematic issue. This issue, in association with the Festival's programming policy and its reflection on EIF's Mission Statement, will be explored in the last section of this chapter.

Furthermore, the Scottish National Party complained that no major Scottish event had been included in the Festival's 1994 programme. McMaster soon responded to this accusation in his 1995 programme with a series of twenty-one late-night concerts of North-eastern Scottish folk song, presented by some of Scotland's most celebrated folk singers. Some Scottish theatre, such as Tag Theatre and Citizen's Theatre, was also included in his programme.

As an international cultural event, the programming strategy at EIF has always been influenced by global occurrences, and Drummond's tenure saw no

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<sup>21</sup> The figure is calculated by the number of shows in a run under the category of drama.



exception. As a result of the Falklands War between Britain and Argentina during March-June of 1982, one cancellation in that year's festival was due to the reality of political ideology. Geneva Opera-Ballet withdrew because the director was an Argentinean and he felt that the tensions occasioned by the conflict in the Falklands made a visit at that time inappropriate.

In addition to political concerns, the venue problem has always been a serious issue - enough to give the Festival Directors headaches. Even with everything John Drummond did to establish the Festival's firm standing on the cultural map of the world, he was still tormented about venues. The venues were owned by the Council, and each year the Festival encountered financial difficulty because the District Council raised the rents -- a trick to reduce the Festival's subsidy. The Council's attitude, in Drummond's opinion, abandoned the beneficial function of its buildings and, even worse, ignored their public responsibility. For example, the backstage of the King's Theatre was appalling to use, and six rows of the most expensive seats had to be taken out in order to put in six rows of expensive musicians. This space constriction was inappropriate and did not make any sense at all for the performing and audience space. Even if the Usher Hall was an exceptional concert hall, there was only one room for all the principal artists and no supporting facilities for the audience. The Lyceum had been the subject of an expensive refurbishment, but this had been entirely confined to the front of the house, whereas the real problem was on the stage. Consequently, the Festival in Drummond's opinion was gradually losing its initial youthful ideals and reputation, on which Edinburgh had depended for so long,

and foreign governments had lost their intention to invest a great amount of money just for the honour of coming to Edinburgh. Opera and ballet companies would just look at the theatres and say, 'You must be joking. We cannot possibly perform here' (Miller, 1996:99). Responding to these circumstances, Drummond came up with a solution whereby he began to seek and invite opera/ ballet companies that had stages of similar dimensions to those in Edinburgh. Thus, the numbers within the productions would not need to be reduced and accommodating a company's performance needs would not cost too much.

Before he left the Festival, John Drummond seriously addressed the venue issue to the local authorities again and he expressed that worst of all was the sheer embarrassment of trying to persuade leading opera and dance companies to perform in conditions which made it impossible for them to present their work properly. The alternative was to accept second- or even third-class standards, which he was not prepared to do; the Festival had to operate at the highest level or not at all. He found it unacceptable and indefensible that in 1983 the buildings and other facilities were still in almost the same condition as they were thirty-seven years previously. It was the Robert Ponsonby story all over again. With no prospect of another job, Drummond was ready to risk unemployment rather than betray certain principles.

Apart from some unexpected events (such as the blaze in the backstage area at Playhouse Theatre in 1993), in contrast, the venue issue for Brian McMaster seemed not as serious a nightmare as for other Directors. After forty-seven years of appealing for a proper theatre, in the year of 1994, within McMaster's

tenure, this request was met as construction of the new Edinburgh Festival Theatre began; it was officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen on 6 July 1999.

### **Financial Concerns**

When there were not big enough budgets to build desirable Festivals, John Drummond found solutions by adapting his programming policy as Frank Dunlop did. EIF accepted self-funding by companies and went even further to cooperate with other events. In Drummond's first festival, for example, Rustaveli Company from Georgia provided their own international airfare. Likewise, the City of Munich sponsored an exhibition to the 1979 Festival in conjunction with the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Edinburgh and Munich's being sister cities. With the exception of the hanging of pictures, the catalogue and the publicity, all charges were paid for by the City of Munich.

Moreover, in order to broaden the range of the programme in economical ways, Drummond tried to establish connections with other festivals such as the Film Festival, the Television Festival and the Fringe Society to have their programme as part of associated events in the official Festival programme. In this case, Drummond was especially keen to improve the relationship with the Fringe, as a number of companies appearing regularly on the Fringe were of a sufficiently high standard to merit inclusion in the Festival programme as associated events

by offering the companies some financial guarantees.

Financial difficulties had also led John Drummond to modify his programming strategy by cancelling some programmes. The 1982 Festival was to be an Italian year, but for financial reasons, an exhibition of Italian contemporary art was cancelled (a similar exhibition had been cancelled in 1969). Furthermore, with the planning of 1983's programme, fees already arranged with overseas companies were now being affected by the falling value of sterling, thus adding to the expenditure on productions. Drummond was forced to renegotiate a contract with the Hamburg State Opera, and the Opera Theatre of St Louis also asked for an increased payment.

At the same time, inflation was getting worse and rents were getting higher. All of these financial issues led Drummond to expect an increased grant for 1983. However, on 7 March 1983, it was announced at a Council meeting that the grant would only be 5 per cent higher than in the previous year. Although various cuts had already been made in the programme, including a visit by Berlin's Ballet of the Komische Opera as well as a contemporary music group, it became apparent that the deficit for 1983 would be around £70,000.

Apart from Brian McMaster, Festival Directors had always fought with councillors for financial support. Because of its artistic success, the forty-ninth Festival also broke all box office records. In 2003, the total receipts at the box office reached over £2,230,000, increasing its income by thirty-one percent. Though the Festival Director's regime played the most influential part in the Edinburgh

Festival's latest success, Edinburgh District Council and Lothian Regional Council<sup>22</sup> also played a critical role, in that over the previous fourteen years they had helped the Festival by increasing its grant from £750,000 in 1990 to £1,440,000 in 2003.<sup>23</sup> The grant from the Scottish Arts Council had similarly increased from £553,300 in 1989 to £1,090,000 in 2003.<sup>24</sup> Sponsorship also created a massive increase in grants, which in 1990 stood at £603,745 and in 2003 reached over £1,700,000.<sup>25</sup> These gradually increasing funds were not earned easily, but at last Brian McMaster had the additional money he required.

### **Personal Expertise and Preferences**

Owen Dudley Edwards wrote in *The Men at the Top* (1983) that, although Frank Dunlop was a great believer in breaking new ground, John Drummond had been the pre-eminent pathfinder and pioneer.

Drummond's Predecessors Lord Harewood and Peter Diamand had preferred to focus on the musical issues, and even suggested that the Festival should leave drama and visual arts to their assistants. However, John Drummond aimed to get involved in all aspects of the Festival. Despite being aware that the Festival programme should be balanced, Drummond declared in Owen Dudley Edwards' *The Men at the Top* 'well, if my resources are to be limited, I will concentrate on

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<sup>22</sup> Under local government reorganization in May 1995, Lothian Regional Council ceased to exist and its role was taken by the new Edinburgh City Council.

<sup>23</sup> Annual Review of 2003, Edinburgh International Festival Society.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

the art I love best, and the others can pick up the scraps that fall from music's table.' (1983:8)

Political and financial concerns are important considerations within Directors' programming strategies. In reality, personal professional expertise and preferences are the major matters driving forward Festival programming, in spite of whatever is being said. This can be seen as Drummond considered that the programme had become slightly repetitive in that the same roster of top-class artists, occasionally referred to as the 'Diamand Mafia' (Giulini, Abbado, Barenboim, Berganza, Fischer-Dieskau and Stern), was dominant; as a dance enthusiast, Drummond was determined to restore ballet to its due prominence in the programme. As a result of Drummond's personal preferences, the number of dance performances saw a dramatic increase from one in 1978 to ten in 1979. His effort in balancing the programme proved successful, and the theatre programme in 1981 won almost complete approval from the professional critics. Allen Wright commented in *The Scotsman* (22 August, 1981):

The pace at which the Festival Director has been bowling bumpers at us this week has been staggering. In six deliveries of drama on successive evenings, John Drummond has taken five wickets. (p.6)

Another of Drummond's achievements was his decision to expand Harewood's idea of constructing each Festival around a particular theme. Frank Dunlop also followed this thematic arrangement. In his first Festival, Drummond arranged a Diaghilev year to honour the exact fiftieth anniversary of Diaghilev's death on 19th August 1929. Next, this idea was extended to the fields of opera, ballet,

theatre, visual arts and concerts and later was fulfilled by Drummond's former colleagues – the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Owen Dudley Edwards approved of this thematic arrangement. As he says:

So much has grown up around the Official Festival, not only the Fringe, but also the Film Festival and the TV insiders-jamboree, and now the Book Fair, so much, as I say, now encircles the Official Festival that, without a theme, its events are apt to be lost and uncharacterised in the general hullabaloo. (1983:8)

Also, as an innovator, John Drummond revived the Festival's atmosphere by restoring its spirit of adventure and exuberance. Thus, he gave it a new direction, pointing the way towards its survival as something unique and valuable. In his adventurous music programme in 1979, the concerts featured nine conductors who had never appeared at the Festival before. When he announced his programme, Drummond predicted that it would push the critics into separate disputes and that the critics of music, drama and dance would step on each other's toes. He thought that that was all to the good: the performing arts should be combined with each other and not put in separate specialized compartments. Almost every theatrical production became a mixture of drama with other art forms such as mime, opera, music or dance. The following also points out that programming could be quite arbitrary, as described by Allan Massie:

For too long the main Festival drama consisted of indifferent performances of Shakespeare, often by scratch companies...Instead Drummond adopted the policy of making Edinburgh the place in Britain where you could see the best foreign drama. Of course there had been

fine foreign drama before...in the Diamand years, but their appearance had always had a fortuitous air. But now this is changed. (1983:8-9)

Moreover, Drummond carried out improvements in his festivals by planning to have an Artist-in-Residence each week of the 1979 Festival. He also arranged for the Galway and the Netherlands Wind Ensemble to perform in a variety of spaces at different times of the day, from morning until late evening, as well as giving performances in schools throughout the region. In 1980, Drummond successfully introduced the National Theatre to Edinburgh's audience – their first ever appearance in the Festival. In another adventure, he brought Tadeusz Kantor's show to the official Festival as Kantor's *Cricot 2* had already been to the Fringe three times and all of these gained positive reviews. Reviewing the show, Allen Wright described in *The Scotsman* (27 August, 1980) that *Cricot 2*'s *Wielepole* was:

A fearsome dance of death, culminating in a grotesque travesty of the Last Supper, with a forest of bayonets and crucifixes being raised over the final scene of carnage...These remarkable Poles, whose present base is in Florence, never fail to astonish us, but '*Wielepole*' must be their greatest achievement, and it is one of the most extraordinary experiences I have had at any Festival. (p.8)

John Drummond also considered that the Fringe was more attractive to a younger and liberal-minded audience than was the official Festival. With a narrowing down of the differences between the two events, Drummond was planning to bring this potential group of younger people into the main Festival audience. Drummond's idea towards the 'Fringersed' Festival's character was echoed and taken even further by his successor Frank Dunlop, and was later



established in his unique era. The bottom line of Drummond's objective was the idea of rotating the balance between the different art forms each year. In the 1982 Festival, Drummond decided that he would focus on opera involving at least four celebrated and influential companies. That was seen as an act of atonement for the minimal effort toward opera in the previous Festival.

Regarding cooperation between EIF and other events, the consideration for John Drummond was not only about financial reality but also about his personal preference. With his encouragement, a committee was formed to organise a book fair during the 1983 Festival. The event was held in a large tent in Charlotte Square Gardens and supported by funding from the Scottish Arts Council. A hundred and twenty authors, including John Updike, Anthony Burgess and Anita Desai, were present at the Book Festival. With an attendance of about thirty-thousand people, it was deemed an immediate success and was later established as an annual event.

Like John Drummond and Frank Dunlop, Brian McMaster had his own thoughts about programming policy. Unlike his two predecessors, Brian McMaster wanted to give the Festival a more characteristic quality by dropping in some Fringe-style events, particularly in the drama programme. He felt that the official Festival should present some distinctive, high-quality, large-scale performances that the Fringe groups were not able to afford. As a result of this decision in McMaster's regime, the official event artistically revived its pre-eminent position by presenting well-known artists and companies with different talents. For example, Claudio Abbado, Peter Sellars, Yo-Yo Ma, as well as the St

Petersburg Orchestra were all guests at the EIF. Unbelievably, most of the names mentioned above are mainly from Europe and North America. Among those, only Yo-Yo Ma can be seen as an artist from Asia (although he was already a citizen of the United States at that time). This phenomenon might suggest that Brian McMaster favoured a Western biased programme.

In addition, to retain a stricter control on quality, McMaster wanted to programme all events that were not organised and promoted by the Society. What follows is an example to illustrate how Brian McMaster enforced his 'high-quality' policy without being compromised. There was always a grey area in the agenda of exhibitions. In the fifties, the only major Festival exhibitions were those presented by the Society in association with the Royal Scottish Academy and the Arts Council of Great Britain, who had undertaken the organisation of the exhibitions. In the sixties, Harewood invited Richard Buckle to mount the Epstein Exhibition on behalf of the Festival Society. Afterwards, a number of additional exhibitions took place, and they were all accommodated in either the National Gallery of Scotland or the Royal Scottish Museum.

In 1974 Peter Diamand attempted to include in the EIF programme some associate exhibitions that were not organised by the Society. During Frank Dunlop's period, these increased. In 1991, there were over forty exhibitions included in the Official Souvenir Guide. Therefore, Brian McMaster insisted that only the exhibitions in the National Galleries should be advertised in the brochure of 1992 Festival.

Another goal announced by McMaster was to reflect the best of Scottish culture and to encourage Scottish arts organisations to present their works to the world. To emphasize the opera as the priority in his Festival, McMaster's 1993 programme juxtaposed works by Schubert and Janacek with Verdi and the Scottish composer James McMillan, and the programme was for once greeted with enthusiasm. Huge Canning, the bane of Frank Dunlop, commented in the *Sunday Times* (15 August 1993),

In less than two years as festival director, Brian McMaster has reversed what had seemed the inexorable decline of classical music at Edinburgh ... McMaster's wide-ranging musical contacts are already producing dividends in the 1993 programme ... his operatic fare, however, has still to recover from the lean Dunlop years ... McMaster has cleverly combined the thorny problems of new and Scottish music in one glamorous, user-friendly package: the talented attention-seeking, Catholic-socialist-Scottish Nationalist composer, James MacMillan, who is treated to a high-profile mini-festival within the context of the wider event. (p.9.15)

Apart from the music selection, which was criticised as sort of safe-hand, McMaster's drama programme was innovative, distinct and adventurous in its first run. In this case, McMaster presented seven Cecil Philip Taylor plays followed by seven of Harley Granville Barkers'. As Mark Fisher stated in the *McMaster Plan* (1992):

His (McMaster's) argument is that no one is obliged to see seven C.P. Taylor plays followed by seven Harley Granville Barkers, but the option is there for anyone who wants to. True enough, but for every extra play in retrospective – and many of the producing companies are not in the top league – there's one less space for the kind of unexpected delight with which the Festival has become associated. (p.8)

Following on in 1994, as Miller recalled, there were two productions of Shakespeare's plays that were even more controversial: a satirical *Antony and Cleopatra* by Peter Zadek, cast with the Berliner Ensemble's Gert Voss and Eva Mattes as the principals, and a visually splendid but slow-moving *Winter's Tale* by the talented, young French director Stephane Braunschweig. The drama programme finally climaxed when Peter Stein presented his grand seven-hour-long production of the *Oresteia* by Aeschylus, in Russian, in Murrayfield Ice Rink. This 2,500 year-old drama depicted the birth of civil law and a new democratic order in the final section, which was extremely meaningful to Russians. Its topicality was completely brought home by its Russian cast which only five years before had taken part in their country's first free elections.

In Miller's opinion, Brian McMaster's innovations also featured a dance programme regarded as the finest in the history of the festival. Presented by five diverse companies from America and Canada, nineteen performances of fourteen works by the most significant choreographers in the twentieth century unfolded the most outstanding performances ever. In addition to Mark Morris, there were the theatricals of Jean-Pierre Perreault, total minimalism combined with the modern film techniques of Lucinda Childs, and the delicate, philosophical forms of Merce Cunningham, the 75 year-old master of modern dance. However, the real surprise was Edward Villella's young Miami City Ballet, which performed two significant programmes of works by George Balanchine, including his full-length ballet *Jewels* – a British premiere.

All in all, evaluating John Drummond and Brian McMaster's Festivals, the former was perhaps the most multifaceted of all the Festival Directors. His five Festivals were by far the most finely balanced in artistic styles, almost equally representing all art forms. However, this evaluation was contested by Owen Dudley Edwards (1983); he complained that Drummond's music knowledge and preferences had turned Edinburgh into a great music Festival (even though the Opera still had to be ingeniously and expensively adapted to inadequate houses.) However, outside the field of music, the Festival languished.

In contrast, because of the financial and political stability of the 1990s, Brian McMaster was able to select productions by concentrating on their quality criterion without very much emphasis on political or financial considerations. Under these circumstances, McMaster succeeded in resurrecting musical standards and promoting dance to a better position in the Festival programme, whilst at the same time retaining the drama programme at an international level. There was no doubt that the official event had regained its outstanding artistic position.

John Drummond's greatest contribution was in promoting the Festival, making it more acceptable to the citizens of Edinburgh. Although he was still unconvinced that his efforts in this direction would bear fruit, as in the case of the theatres, Drummond did the spadework, paving the way for Frank Dunlop who was to follow in his footsteps to direct the Festival. On the other hand, Dunlop's radical shift in programming policy created much controversy. His successor, Brian

McMaster, reversed the situation and abandoned most of Dunlop's 'Fringeries' ideas and re-established the Edinburgh International Festival's reputation as one of the leading 'elite' cultural events.

The connections of the programming policy between Frank Dunlop's Dynasty and John Drummond and Brian McMaster's Regimes have been explored in this section. The exploration of EIF's programming policy in this thesis has focused on Frank Dunlop's regime, with supportive evidence identified by the analysis of John Drummond and Brian McMaster's programming strategies. From a macro-historical perspective of this research on the issue of EIF programming policy, then, the concerns which drove the Directors' programming direction before Drummond must be included for the sake of the validity of this hypothesis. Therefore, the next section will examine the impacts of political and financial concerns as well as the personal expertise and preferences that moved the Directors' consideration towards the EIF's programming strategy during The Sovereignities since 1947.

### **2.2.3 The Sovereignities since 1947**

When the proposal to establish an international festival was rejected by Oxford, Edinburgh, after heated debate, received the opportunity and thereby developed its own cultural status. Consequently, this development not only gained economic benefits for the city, but also won Edinburgh a reputation as the

capital of international festivals.

Rudolf Bing was the person who created the first Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama, in 1946. Edinburgh had an enormous heritage, a colourful history and was barely damaged by German bombing during World War II. After deep consideration, Rudolf Bing was convinced to establish a festival in Edinburgh through passionate invitation to foreign companies to enjoy all facilities the city would like to provide. After presenting his proposal to Sir John Falconer, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and to several other parties,<sup>26</sup> Bing received approval and support.

An interim committee was formed and Rudolf Bing and the Glyndebourne Society were assigned to design the Festival's 1947 programme. In September 1946, Bing obtained unanimous approval from the Town Council for a programme involving a three-week festival between 24th August and 13th September 1947. The Festival Society, a permanent organisation for the Festival, was formed soon after the Council meeting and Rudolf Bing was appointed as the Artistic Director. The interim committee became the Council of the Festival Society with the Lord Provost as Chairman. As the budget for 1947 Festival, the Festival Society received £20,000 funding from Edinburgh City Council, and a further £20,000 came from citizens. Thus, the first EIF opened with L'Orchestra des Concerts Colonne, a French orchestra, on 24 August 1947.

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<sup>26</sup> Such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Travel Association, the Hotel Association of Edinburgh and Scotland, the railway companies and theatrical and musical organisations.

Since then, EIF has established its status as one of the major international arts festivals in the world.

Before John Drummond was appointed as the Festival Director in 1979, the Festival had been through five Directors since its premiere in 1947. Rudolf Bing, Ian Hunter, Robert Ponsonby, Lord Harewood and Peter Diamand all encountered varied obstacles such as political and financial influences as well as the limits of their personal knowledge and taste in creating their own programming policy. What follows will examine those influences which interacted with the programming strategy from 1947.

### **Political Concerns**

When Rudolf Bing accepted the offer from the Council of the Festival Society to become the Artistic Director, he was also the General Manager of the Glyndebourne Society. This dual role was good for Bing, allowing him to control these two organisations to make cohesive artistic planning. However, this close relationship between the Festival and the Glyndebourne Society became a nightmare for Bing's successor – Ian Hunter – to deal with. Indeed, Hunter had considered cutting the umbilical cord between those two societies, but he was also concerned by the risk involved in doing so. After Rudolf Bing left the Festival in 1949, Ian Hunter was responsible only to the Festival Society, although the Glyndebourne Society was still doing artistic management. In fact,



Bing was still doing programming for the EIF after Hunter was appointed as the Artistic Director.

This relationship created some problems. For example, in the operatic programme, some members of the Festival Council were keen to widen the range of opera at the Festival and, for 1950 tenders were made to Covent Garden and La Scala as well as the Glyndebourne. However, in a letter to the Lord Provost, Sir Andrew Murray (7 July 1949), Bing strongly recommended the Glyndebourne/ Opéra-Comique option on the grounds that it would be madness for the society to take the unnecessary risk of possibly lowering its operatic standards, particularly when there would be no financial savings. Bing also pointed out that the high standard of Glyndebourne was well-known but there was some uncertainty as to what Covent Garden would provide. As a result of this response from Bing, the programme committee decided to accept his idea and just left in place the original plan to invite other opera houses for the following year.

The same story happened again when Hunter planned to invite Hamburg State Opera to present their works in the 1952 programme. John Christie, the founder of Glyndebourne Society and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, was upset that he had not been consulted about the visiting of the German opera company. John Christie expressed his opinion in a meeting with the Lord Provost on 29 August 1951, saying that 'he personally considered that the standard of opera in Germany was low,' and emphasized that 'as the Hamburg State Opera was a

national rather than an international ensemble, it might not offer the same standard as Glyndebourne.' (Miller, 1996:28) By this time, the Festival Council had already decided on a change. This change caused rumours in the press about the issue that Glyndebourne had been dropped from the 1952 programme. At the final press conference of the 1951 Festival, the official announcement claimed that:

The Festival Society are happy to assert that both they and Glyndebourne are most anxious that this collaboration, close and fortunate to both, which has been built up over the past five years shall be fully maintained. The possibilities of inviting other operatic organisations to Edinburgh were explored with the knowledge and concurrence of Glyndebourne in 1947, 1948, 1949 and 1950. Glyndebourne would continue to have artistic management of the Festival. (Miller, 1996:28)

However, without Glyndebourne's approval, Ian Hunter found it was getting harder to invite other opera companies; music lovers were upset and wrote to local papers to support Glyndebourne. Hunter sensed that Christie was angry with him, and that their relationship was gradually cooling down because Christie had given Hunter a job after the war, and the former employer felt that Hunter was disloyal to him.

Consequently, with the visit of the Hamburg State Opera in 1952, Ian Hunter achieved independence from Glyndebourne by bringing independent large-scale opera to the Festival; this was the first step in the chain of events that led to the final break with Glyndebourne. Relations with Glyndebourne were further strained in 1954 because of overspending on the opera budget. On 13 January 1954, the Festival Council decided to drop the name of the Glyndebourne

Society from its official stationery; during the 1954 Festival Christie formally tendered Glyndebourne's resignation of Artistic Management of the Festival to the Lord Provost. Since then, the Edinburgh Festival has grown and developed in its own way.

In consideration of international political circumstances, Robert Ponsonby – Ian Hunter's successor – was forced to compromise on the criteria of programme selection. When Ponsonby considered inviting the Berliner Ensemble from East Germany to present *Ondine* in English for the 1956 Festival, he encountered political pressure. The Foreign Office, according to Programme Committee on 21st February 1956, asked the Society to end the negotiations, which would avoid causing embarrassment to the West German Government, which was funding the appearance of the Hamburg State Opera.<sup>27</sup>

Moreover, at that time, a Russian division had taken control of Czechoslovakia and the Festival inevitably got involved in another political crisis. The USSR State Orchestra was planning to perform two concerts on 24th and 25th August 1969, but the offices of the *Scotsman* and the *Edinburgh Evening News* were inundated with furious protest mail suggesting either cancelling or delaying the concerts. A number of political groups arranged demonstrations to urge concert-goers to protest against the invasion by staying away from the concerts. The demonstrations had only minor effect on the concerts, and in the end, the players were greeted with great applause when they walked onto the stage

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<sup>27</sup> Miller, 1996:39

The venue problem - always a torment for the Directors since 1947 - was more acute than political considerations. As a temporary plan, the Edinburgh Corporation wanted to build two theatres on the derelict Castle Terrace site: a large theatre suitable for opera and a smaller arena theatre. As yet, no progress had been made over many years. The existing theatres were not only unsatisfactory but also rapidly decreasing in numbers. The Empire, for example, which had originally been used for ballet, had become a bingo hall for 30 years since 1963, and although it was converted back into a theatre for the 1963 Festival, the result was far from ideal.

After loss of the venue, ballet was eliminated from the programme, as the King's Theatre was required for opera and the Lyceum had no orchestra pit. The small Gateway Theatre was under threat of closure, and the arrangements for the King's Theatre had to be suspended. At this stage, Peter Diamand found himself without venues for either opera or ballet, the two most vital elements in his 1967 programme which was to feature works by Stravinsky and Bach. In order to accommodate the New York City Ballet, negotiations with Empire Theatre had to be undertaken. By the end of 1966, Howard & Wyndham Ltd.<sup>28</sup> consented to allow the King's Theatre to be used by the Society at a vastly increased rent and Mecca Bingo<sup>29</sup> agreed to a rental for the Empire, provided the Society paid the conversion costs.

The issue of being short of facilities in the King's Theatre recurred in 1968 and

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<sup>28</sup> The owner of Kings Theatre between 1928 and 1969.

<sup>29</sup> The owner of Empire Theatre until 1992.

this time involved accusations from a performing group. The problem was that when the Hamburg State Opera was invited for their third visit in 1968, they had to compromise their ideal productions. Since their large sets would not fit onto the stage at the King's, the Opera had had to reduce their three productions in order to bring them to Edinburgh. As an intermediary of Hamburg State Opera, Professor Liebermann announced in a press conference: 'The programme is not the choice of Mr. Diamand. It is not the choice of the Hamburg Opera. It is the choice of the stage of the King's Theatre.' (Miller, 1996:72-73)

This was the worst thing in the world that could ever occur for the image of the King's Theatre, to Professor Liebermann's mind. At the time, this image and criticism received a harsh response. Peter Donald, the manager of the King's, informed Diamand that it would not be available to the Society unless Edinburgh Corporation purchased the theatre. This sentiment was reinforced in a letter from Peter Donald to the Festival Society (28 September 1968):

In view of the adverse criticism directed against the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, on the grounds of its alleged inadequacy to house opera, and the consequent damage done to its reputation as a theatre, my directors have decided that the King's Theatre will no longer be available to the Festival Society. (Miller, 1996:73)

From Peter Diamand's point of view, the Festival Society could not take responsibility for the opinions expressed by representatives of the Hamburg Opera. Furthermore, Donald had given an understanding during the previous year that the theatre would be available for two to three years at a rent of £4,000 per week. The result of this debate was that a large grant from the Scottish Arts

Council and a substantial donation from an anonymous Edinburgh citizen enabled the Corporation to purchase the King's Theatre, which subsequently offered it to the Festival Society at a rent of £1,000 per week.

Although the ownership of King's Theatre had shifted to the local authority, the condition of the theatre was still unsatisfactory. In the 1975 Festival, Toby Robertson, the director of Scottish Opera's *Hermiston*, complained that at the King's, they were not able to do what was required to bring up the scenery in front of the audience. Robertson went on to say that the production used to be perfectly performed at the multi-purpose McRobert Centre in Stirling. He had to make at least seven changes in his production for the venue's sake, and was upset because the changes confused the sense of the set. He suggested afterwards, 'I cannot understand why the opera companies of the world still come here. It must be a tribute to Peter Diamand or possibly to Edinburgh.'<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, Peter Diamand immediately received a setback after the 1975 Festival. The local authorities announced that the building of an opera house would no longer be undertaken by the new Edinburgh District Council, even after almost thirty years of arguing, negotiating, programming, and procrastination. This caused the Festival to remain in the same position with the old facilities it had had since 1947. Finally, the venue issue was solved in 1994 when the Festival Theatre was built.

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<sup>30</sup> Miller, 1996:88

### **Financial Concerns**

Due to the ELF's high reputation, foreign governments, in the early days, had been ready to give their companies abundant funds so that they were able to 'fly the flag' in an arena as important as Edinburgh. Major casts were gathered together, and scenery was created specifically for the dimensions of the King's Theatre. Also, since the performances were all of a high standard, the public and the press gave them high praise. Thus, the prestige value of the visit justified the effort and expense. Nevertheless, the situation had changed since the 1960's – because of the increased mobility of more available air travel, leading artists were spreading their activities all over the world. Also, with expanded recording techniques and studios, more and more artists were engaged in recording, especially from July to September. Moreover, many more international festivals had suddenly arisen, and that caused increasing competition for the services of the small groups of high-rate singers.

This change of circumstances was adding more financial pressure on the Festival, as the programming budget had to be increased for artists' payments. As a result, according to Miller (pages 68 and 92), the tenure of Peter Diamand is a good example to illustrate how financial concerns and management interacted with programming policy.

In 1967, the Festival marked its twenty-first anniversary. Peter Diamand, as the successor of Lord Harewood, had planned a programme that would reflect the

standing of the Festival as one of the world's major arts events, and would also let Scottish Opera have its first appearance before a worldwide audience. However, Diamand encountered a serious problem: the budget. By June 1966 he had been given no indication of how much money would be allocated for the 1967 Festival; the second problem was that he did not know which venues would be available. Due to an estimated loss of £15,000, which soon increased to £72,000, on the New York City Ballet, some Council members were inclined to drop ballet from the 1967 programme. Nevertheless, Diamand focused on the great significance and essential nature of Stravinsky's works and said that the press would definitely react with hostility if it were omitted. Thus, Diamand presented his argument at a Council meeting on 24th January 1967. In Miller's view, it was very important for his budget to be accepted, otherwise, he would have to take any necessary action to achieve a better result. Besides, on his appointment he had been instructed to arrange an appropriate programme for the twenty-first Festival, and he had assumed that sufficient funds would be available. After much effort negotiating, the budget was finally approved.

As the budget came mainly from the Edinburgh Corporation, the Festival Society's financial condition was always unstable. For instance, Edinburgh Corporation in July 1965 had paid an extra £25,000 to the Society, which meant it brought the total grant for the 1964 Festival to £75,000. However, in July 1967 it dropped a bombshell by cutting the grant for 1968 to £50,000. When the Corporation's unanimous decision was communicated to him, Diamand, flew immediately to Edinburgh, and threatened to resign. Whether or not he meant



the resignation, he was outspoken in his criticism of the Corporation's action, which he described as 'a vote of censure on the Festival.' He also said that it was impossible to arrange the programme of the 1967 Festival on the basis of a mere £50,000 budget.

In 1968 Peter Diamand again brought up the financial issues of the forthcoming Festival. In press conferences held in Edinburgh and London, he questioned the entire function and uncertainty of the Corporation's contribution. He declared that the Festival had become an important international festival through decades of development, and so the budget should have risen every year. Without sufficient funds, the Festival could not continue at its current high artistic standard; without high-level programmes, there was no way to achieve other funding. Consequently, at every meeting he pointed out that Edinburgh Corporation was gradually putting up resistance to the Festival. Although an additional £25,000 was approved, this only meant that there had been much resistance to the allocation of funds when compared to previous years, because of devaluation. While planning recent Festivals, he had found it extremely difficult to produce an appropriate programme for the Festival under such restricted financial conditions. Now, it was becoming almost impossible. It was essential that the Council should seriously consider whether the Festival should continue, and on what conditions it would rely. He had arranged the 1968 Festival under such poor conditions that he was not even sure if there would be sufficient funds to run all the activities.

Finally, the extra £25,000 for the 1968 Festival was granted, but it was still

difficult to have it approved by the Corporation. By the time of a Council meeting on 3rd May 1968, Lord Provost Herbert Brechin thought it might be a mistake to count on a contribution of £75,000 for the 1969 Festival. If a reduction in the Corporation's grant suggested a reduction from the Scottish Arts Council's donation, it would be impossible for the Festival Director to make any commitments for the 1969 Festival. As time went by and preparations became even more difficult and expensive, Diamand made it clear that he would not take responsibility for the 1969 Festival unless an immediate decision was made. After a little while, he received permission to proceed.

The phantom of finance was still lurking. Diamand's preliminary budget for the 1973 Festival showed an estimated deficit of £91,570. At a Council meeting on 6 November 1972, he insisted that if the Festival were expected to retain its standards, the subsidy would need to increase. He also suggested that sponsorship could be sought for certain productions. If the Corporation and the Scottish Arts Council could not increase their contributions in line with rising costs, new sources of income would have to be found right away.

After a long discussion, the Council decided to take £50,000 away. Thus Diamand had no choice but to suggest some ways to achieve these cuts. These included either dropping a new Edinburgh Festival production, *Don Giovanni*, or postponing the visit of the Hungarian State Opera and Ballet. Fortunately the Hungarian event was eventually staged, as it was absolutely necessary to pay some atonement to the artists if the event was cancelled. Meanwhile, Diamand

was still negotiating to, perhaps, cut out performances at the Church Hill Theatre, the Gateway and the Haymarket Ice Rink; but that was just a tentative possibility. This was not only a great blow to the balance of the Festival, but especially to the Haymarket Ice Rink, which had attracted a new and younger audience. On 28th November, 1972, the Council admitted with reluctance that it was worth doing this because cutting out some venues would cause the least damage to the Festival's reputation.

As Festival Director, Peter Diamand had to deal with various unexpected problems in connection with financial concerns. For example, in 1973 Diamand had to cancel what had promised to be a very popular event, the Festival's first promenade concerts. The reasons for this cancellation were not only the financial problems but also another bizarre problem. In order to allow up to 2,500 people to stand in the stalls area of the Usher Hall, an extremely difficult technical problem had to be resolved. However, without consulting either the Festival Society or the Scottish National Orchestra, the town council decided to install new seats which could not be removed.

In February, 1974, Edinburgh Corporation finally agreed that the subsidy to the Festival would be the product of a halfpenny rate instead of a fixed sum, ensuring an automatic rise each year. With an additional £5,000 from the Scottish Arts Council, the 1975 Festival resulted in a small surplus of £721 instead of the estimated deficit of £45,000. This was Diamand's fifth surplus since he took over the post in 1966.

Although ticket sales were increasing and costs were well controlled in

productions at the King's Theatre, the Society still needed to face the worldwide financial problems of inflation and devaluation. Since the grant from the Region would no longer be increased, it was understandable that the Labour party members of Edinburgh District Council would not contribute any extra funds. Even if the Scottish Arts Council wanted to increase its subvention to the Festival, it would, at the same time, expect the local authorities to increase their subsidies. Later in 1975, however, an increase of £75,000 was announced, bringing the Scottish Arts Council's subsidy to £225,000. In order to offset a similar increase in rents for theatres, the local authorities again contributed £90,000 each, with Edinburgh District Council providing an additional £16,000, which was a typical example of giving with one hand and taking away with the other, as Miller explained.

Since the budget for the 1977 Festival was far below what was necessary to maintain standards, Diamand wrote a new budget plan. He dropped performances from 128 in 1976 to 110 in 1977, gave up some performances originally planned at the Large Studio Theatre, and raised ticket prices. Explaining the financial situation and expressing his sincerity, he hoped to get new co-operation from companies and artists and ask them to reduce their performance fee if this revised budget was accepted. However, it all depended on an immediate final decision. The Council (1st November, 1976) finally accepted the revised budget plan; therefore, Diamand began to use his professional skills and tried to convince the top artists that the Festival, even with such reduced funding, would still be more prestigious than other profitable

activities elsewhere, as long as they all contributed their faith and artistic skills. As the result of this effort, Teresa Berganza<sup>31</sup> agreed to reduce her fee because the production of *Carmen* was initially her idea.

Then, the whole plan started working out. Some great musicians, such as Claudio Abbado, Placido Domingo and Mirella Freni, gave their support and agreed to the reductions. Domingo left the fee blank while signing his contract, saying he would accept whatever the Society could afford to pay him and he would have no problem with it. Other artists followed, so that Diamand finally put a programme together.

Unfortunately, as Miller notes, the 1977 Festival did not exactly reach the standards of quantity and variety, vital to maintaining the Festival's reputation, because there were only nine opera performances and one overseas orchestra. The only reason that this programme could be achieved at all was the entire participation and generous co-operation of the artists involved. It was a fact that the Festival could not be managed like that, no matter how hard musicians worked or how grateful Diamand was to them.<sup>32</sup>

### **Personal Expertise and Preference**

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<sup>31</sup> Teresa Berganza 1935-, the Spanish opera singer.

<sup>32</sup> Miller, 1996:92

All the Festival Directors in this period of sovereignties were experts in the field of music. Rudolf Bing was the General Manager of the Glyndebourne Society; Bing's successors – Ian Hunter and Robert Ponsonby – were also working for the Glyndebourne Society after the Second World War. Before Lord Harewood replaced Ponsonby as the fourth Director of EIF, he was the Director of Leeds Festival and a former member of the Board at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Lastly, having the second longest tenure in EIF's history, Peter Diamand was a co-founder of the Holland Festival immediately after World War II, and its general manager from 1948 to 1965. After Diamand resigned the post of Festival Director at EIF, he became the general director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London, until 1981.

Based on the Directors' personal knowledge and enthusiasm, the Festival became renowned for its musical programme and established its reputation as one of leading arts festivals in the world. Apart from their emphasis on the musical side, some of the directors made other achievements according to their own taste. Following Bing's three-year directorship, Assistant Director Ian Hunter took over as the Artistic Director of EIF in 1950. The first thing Hunter created for his new style was the inclusion of the visual arts in the official programme. Accordingly, international works from various artists and countries were invited. This innovation was expanded by John Drummond and Frank Dunlop, but was ended in 1994 by the eighth Festival Director, Brian McMaster. Moreover, when Ian Hunter planned his first Festival, he thought that a Scottish festival would be incomplete without some piping and dancing. He then

addressed a letter to Bing and asked for his opinion. After that, Hunter organised a piping and dancing event in the Ross Bandstand in Princes Street Gardens and on the castle esplanade. This has expanded today into the full-scale Military Tattoo which has become an independent event.

During his tenure, the fourth Director Lord Harewood achieved some very valuable goals. As Peter Diamand said in the final press conference of the 1965 Festival:

The standard Lord Harewood has introduced is a very high one, and in my view, one of his many merits is that he has developed the taste of the audience and succeeded in attracting a great many young people. (Miller, 1996:66)

Before he handed over his duties, Lord Harewood contributed his own most significant achievement, which was the formation of the Scottish Festival Chorus (later renamed the Edinburgh Festival Chorus). This was not a new idea, for Rudolf Bing had discussed it in 1948 with Roy Henderson, who had suggested forming a festival chorus of between 150 and 200 voices to be recruited from the Edinburgh and Glasgow areas for the performance of major choral works at the Festival. It had been discussed in a number of committee meetings, but was finally abandoned.

Fortunately, Harewood had more faith in the idea. Arthur Oldham was appointed as chorus master and in the pursuit of excellence he held auditions throughout Scotland in his search for the best choral singers. Weekly rehearsals took place in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow, the full chorus of 240 voices coming

together in Edinburgh only for the final rehearsals. Oldham's dedication and hard work paid off, and the chorus made a sensational debut. The Scottish National Orchestra, under Gibson, for the Mahler Symphony at the opening concert, was described by Conrad Wilson in *the Scotsman* (23 August 1965) as a 'performance which will surely be remembered as a milestone in the history of the Festival and of music in Scotland.' (p.5) Two years later its reputation was consolidated, when that confirmed perfectionist, Herbert von Karajan, agreed to use it for a performance of Bach's *Magnificat*, after which he declared that it was 'one of the three best choruses in Europe,'<sup>33</sup> a fitting climax to an exciting chapter in the history of the Festival.

Unlike his successor – the outspoken John Drummond – Peter Diamand was a reserved person who did not enjoy dealing with public relations. He avoided interviews as much as he could and preferred to remain invisible.

In order to develop the range of audiences and take account of young people's interests as well as to inspire their imagination, Diamand followed Lord Harewood's idea and decided to bring some avant-garde performances into the 1970 Festival. These inspired a series of late-night performances and small theatrical works featured by the Music Theatre Group, a team consisting of young singers, dancers and musicians put together by Alexander Goehr.

Besides, the Haymarket Ice Rink, in association with Diamand's innovative ideas, produced the performance of a group of American students: *Stomp*, the

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<sup>33</sup> Miller, 1996:65



first rock musical in the Festival. Performed on small stages on the three sides of the rink, Miller recalled it was inspiring, exuberant, exciting, and full of joy, and it also brought the audience a new theatrical experience.<sup>34</sup>

Other innovative ideas to secure programme quality under Peter Diamand's tenure were to bring operas into the Festival and to establish its own company to increase the number of special productions belonging to the Edinburgh Festival. Thus, the Society would take entire artistic control of every single detail of the productions in order to improve quality as stated in its Mission Statement. At the beginning, the expense might be high, but Diamand considered that this could be recouped through recording the soundtrack of the plays and selling the productions to other companies. Moreover, co-productions with other festivals were also considered possible. New company established by EIF fitted well with Edinburgh's quality levels, skills and technical limitations, and it was also associated with new productions of Scottish Opera by Scottish composers and well-known foreign productions.

In 1971, under difficult financial conditions, the Festival finally had its own opera production in association with Maggio Musicale, from Florence. Peter Diamand reached another remarkable achievement in the 1978 Festival, in that it was the first time the Festival had established its own drama company, Edinburgh Festival Productions. At the Assembly Hall, this company presented

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<sup>34</sup> Miller, 1996:74-76

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, although it was not entirely successful and the critics were somewhat indifferent.

All in all, the above explorations illustrate that the programming policy for each Festival Director between 1947 and 2000 was firmly constrained by the realities of quality of production, political and financial concerns, and the significant impact of personal expertise and preferences. Accordingly, those realities were interwoven with each other and contributed to the resultant tangible programmes of the Festival. Clearly, personal expertise and preference are the essential factors dominating programming strategy among all the Directors. In this regard, a Eurocentric orientation was apparent in each Director's programme except Frank Dunlop's. How this Eurocentrism affected intercultural translation on this international platform, the next chapter will examine, as it considers the root of Interculturalism – Orientalism.

### Chapter 3: West Meets East

To believe that the Orient was created – or, as I call it, 'Orientalised' – and to believe that such things happen simply as a necessity of the imagination, is to be disingenuous. (Said, 1978:5)

It is not only the field of theatre that is affected; cultural translation from any perspective brings with it different problems. It is a two way street; on the one hand, a Eurocentric (and Amerocentric) view affects any interpretation of a non-Western text, but it also works the other way around – Eastern views affecting interpretations of Western texts. The main question remains (and needs to be stipulated here) whether or not cultural translation and equal cultural exchange are possible at all. From the perspective of the 'Other', one might suggest that 'foreign' – mainly non-Western -- artists question three aspects of intercultural exchange. The first one is how Euro-American culture absorbs and employs Eastern cultures, and this will be discussed in this chapter. The second one involves the Easterners' own artistic productions: how they themselves can assimilate and utilize Euro-American culture. This aspect is also identified in this chapter and will be further explored in Chapter 4. The third aspect, which the last section of this chapter will pursue, is that even when the 'Other's' productions have mixed the traditions of East and West, how these hybridizations are received by the Westerner in the context of Orientalism and Western Interculturalism.

Rustom Bharucha claims in *Theatre and the World – Performance and the Politics of Culture* (1990) that nowadays there is a new idea about '-ism' in the

theatre that needs to be strongly questioned. Vaguely speaking, substituting the older category of Internationalism or Interculturalism is to open up new opportunities of relationships between cultures that seem to 'transcend the specificities of history, race, language and time.' (p.1) It is a straight response, at a certain level, to our continuously shrinking world. The geographical and national boundaries that formerly segregated cultures are now questioned by worldwide transport and the exchange of information. Today, our world is somehow smaller and more accessible – without limits (at least, for those who can afford to travel by air). It is no longer necessary to imagine other cultures by means of travel accounts and translations of texts since it is possible to directly experience these cultures, in as far as tourism enables us to do so.

However, this improvement is not always the case for people wishing to enlarge their horizons and even appreciate other cultures. Therefore, with development of telecommunications, satellite systems, multinational corporations and computers, which are part of a world-unifying order, the phenomenon of Interculturalism in the theatre is only one part of the picture. Whether it is a conscious or unconscious choice, however, there is a possibility for critics to be influenced by Western ideologies such as Orientalism and Western Interculturalism in their comments towards Asian theatre works.

Since Marco Polo's *Il Milione* was published, the Orient has fired the imaginations of numerous Westerners. By the mid-nineteenth century Orientalism was as vast a treasure house of learning as one could imagine.

Raymond Schwab indicates in his *La Renaissance Orientale* that the Oriental Renaissance is roughly from 1765 to 1850. Quite aside from the factual discoveries about the Orient made by learned professionals in Europe during this period, fantasy was widespread and influenced every major poet, essayist, and philosopher. Schwab's concept is that Oriental equals enthusiasm – whether amateur or professional – for everything Asian, wonderfully synonymous with the exotic, the mysterious, the deep, the creative, and the original.

Consequently, by the time of European colonialism, the realm of this imagination was expanded to the Far East. Although most of the former colonies are now independent in terms of political autonomy, since political strength declined in the European countries, the suzerain's cultural influence on colonies and the Western ideology towards Oriental fantasy still remained. This Oriental fantasy towards Asian theatrical features and the Western cultural influence on Asian theatre works were represented by the intercultural theatre practices from both West and East. As Brian Singleton described in *Interculturalism* :

[ Western ] Interculturalism has its roots in Orientalism, a term used to describe a European art movement of the mid-nineteenth century obsessed with both realism and fascination with the unknown, the tribal, non-Christian...(2003:628)

In addition, according to Martin Esslin in *The Theatre of the Absurd*, a public conditioned to an accepted tradition tends to receive the impact of artistic experiences through a filter of critical standards – predetermined expectations

and terms of reference. This is pretty natural to the 'schooling of tastes and faculties of perception' (2001:28). Besides, it is also precisely these tastes and expectations that, in fact, govern the prosperity and adversity of enterprises. Accordingly, Festival critics are the filter of critical standards, and their influence on audience experience is enormous. By the time Frank Dunlop significantly shifted his programming policy to present the diversity of culture from as far as Japan and China, it is necessary to question whether Festival critics were influenced by Orientalism and its drives, or by satisfied audience experience of Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth*, as two intercultural examples. Then, the intricate relationship between Orientalism and intercultural theatre practices should be explored. Moreover, for the Western influence on Asian theatre, examples of theatrical works will be considered in Chapter 4.

### **3.1 Westerners' Expectations of Asian Theatre**

Edward Said once stated, in his *Orientalism*, that representations are both in the forms of constructions and distortions. Roland Barthes said that these distortions are throughout all the operations of language. As a representation in Europe, the Orient is formed, or deformed, out of an increasing specific sensitivity towards a geographical region: the East. Experts in this region do their work on it because their specialty as Orientalists requires them to 'present their society with images of the Orient, knowledge about it, insight into it.' (1978:273)

When Ninagawa and the Shanghai Kunju Theatre presented their intercultural works of *Macbeth* at EIF, Festival critics then felt it their duty to represent their society and present their audience with images of the Orient and Asian theatre, sharing knowledge about it and insight into it. Therefore, as Gang Zhu argued in his *Sa Yi De* (Edward W. Said), when representation becomes misrepresentation, formation is interpreted as deformation and reflection is just corruption, and these are produced in an objective fashion – the miscommunication caused by the language game. However, if this characteristic of representation is applied in the actuality so that causes a series of serious consequences, then it is a totally man-made issue, which means someone has attempted to manipulate language. The evidence for this argument will be provided in the last subsection of this chapter.

The issue of presentation and representation has become a problematic concept in intercultural theatre practice – especially in the practices of the Western side, which borrows codes from Eastern traditions. Consider, for example, whether *The Mahabharata* truly presents the elements of Indian traditions as Peter Brook claims, or whether the *Mahabharata* are misrepresented in favour of a Western audience's' taste, as Rustom Bharucha insists. In order to clarify this problematic phenomenon, Edward Said's theory about Orientalism has been employed significantly in this conflicting debate among scholars, theorists and artists. This employment also explains why Brian Singleton made his conclusion

that Interculturalism comes from Orientalism.<sup>35</sup>

How has the Orient as a place become visible to the Western world as its great complementary opposite? According to Said, the answer can be divided into two stages by the boundary line of the nineteenth century. Before the nineteenth century, as Said commented:

There were the Bible and the rise of Christianity; there were travellers like Marco Polo who charted the trade routes and patterned a regulated system of commercial exchange, and after him Lodovico di Varthema and Pietro della Valle; there were fabulists like Mandeville; there were the redoubtable conquering Eastern movements, principally Islam, of course; there were the militant pilgrims, chiefly the Crusaders (1978:58).

At this stage, most of Said's Orientalists were studying mainly in the realm of Biblical relations, or for the purpose of missionary work. Take, for example, Erpenius and Guillaume Postel, who were linguists but studied the languages only in the regions which had been mentioned in the Bible. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, Orientalists were 'Biblical scholars, students of the Semitic languages, Islamic specialists, or because the Jesuits had opened up the new study of China [ in Ming Dynasty in 1583 ], Sinologists.' (Said, 1978:51)

Following the mid-nineteenth century, the Orient had become, as Benjamin Disraeli said, 'a profession, in which one was able to speak and restore not only the Orient but also oneself.' (Said, 1978:166) Therefore, Orientalism has been developed and defined in many ways in the theoretical realm. All the

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<sup>35</sup> Singleton 2003:628



publications about the Orient have become implements which achieve the dominators' ambitions in both political and economic activities. Orientalism also created an image of the East for the general public as what Victor Kiernan has aptly remarked 'Europe's collective day-dream of the Orient.' (Said, 1978:52)

Moreover, from Silvestre de Sacy's viewpoint, the concept of the Orient in the West is just like a museum, a huge storehouse filled with all kinds of objects. For instance, all drawings and original books, maps, and accounts of voyages were offered to those who wanted to study the Orient. In such a way, each student would be able to feel himself travelling around as if by attraction into a Mongolian tribe or the Chinese race, which he had probably made the object of his studies.

After the publication of an elementary book on...the Oriental languages, nothing is more important than to lay the cornerstone of this museum, which I consider a living commentary upon interpretation (*truchement*) of the dictionaries. (Said, 1978:165-166)

*Truchement* is derived from the Arabic *turjaman*, meaning interpreter, intermediary, or spokesman. In other words, the concept of Orientalism took over the reality of Orient. Besides, it domesticated this knowledge of the Orient to the West, filtering it through regulatory codes, classifications, specimen cases, periodical reviews, dictionaries, grammars, commentaries, editions, translations, all of which together formed a simulacrum of the Orient and reproduced it materially in the West, for the West. Therefore, Edinburgh International Festival – a leading arts event in the West, could be regarded as an art section within this oriental museum. Through its Oriental showcase, the

Westerner can experience the aesthetic achievement of the Orient. Moreover, the Festival critics can be seen as narrators in this art section. Based on the critics' 'erudition' towards Oriental theatre, the audience learns the knowledge of Asian performing arts through the narrators' instruction (criticism).

Consequently, an internally structured archive has been established. This comes in the form of a limited number of typical encapsulations: the journey, the history, the legend, the stereotype, and the controversial confrontation. The Orient is experienced through Orientalists' eyes, and they form the language, understanding, and the way of the East meeting the West. Accordingly, the ideology of Orientalism is transformed from the individual and statements of brave voyagers or residents into the impersonal definitions of a number of scientific workers. It was also transformed from the continual experience of personal study into a fictional and un-walled museum, where everything was gathered from a great remoteness and diversities of Oriental culture turned into 'Oriental' as a category in school. It would even be transformed again and re-established from a number of fragments, piece by piece, brought back by businessmen, adventurers, expeditions, and armies into a so-called Orientalist sense, which has been 'lexicographical,' 'bibliographical,' and 'catalogued.' (Said, 1978:166)

All this is a very difficult and complicated movement to describe, as difficult and complicated as the way any developing discipline crowds out its competitors and possesses authority for its traditions, methods, and institutions, in addition finding general cultural legitimacy for its statements, characteristics, and

agencies. But we can simplify the sheer narrative complication of the operation by indicating the sorts of experiences that Orientalism typically utilized for its own ends and represented for its vast audience. In fact, Orientalism has become a huge subject of study among Western politicians, economists and scholars – even in the general public. The East is not only unique and exotic to Europeans, but it appears to be an ideal place for Western colonisation.

Said also argued that the Orient as it appears in Orientalism is a systematic representation framed by an entire power that brought the Orient into Western consciousness, Western study, and later, the Western Empire. This research believes, as Said suggests, that Orientalism is a product of certain political powers and events, and therefore that the definition of Orientalism may be seen as political. Orientalism is an orientation that all material, like civilizations, races, and regions, happens to be the Orient. Its objective discoveries, such as the work of innumerable devoted scholars who edited and translated texts, codified grammars, composed dictionaries, and re-establish eras, created verifiable learning, are always conditioned by the facts delivered by language. Since they are expressed in words, the truth of language is, then, particularly meaningful.

Gang Zhu also pointed out that Orientalism should be regarded as the product of Imperialism, in which cultural issues are covered by this Imperialism. Since the definition of Imperialism was broadened in the late twentieth century, it is no longer focused only on political invasion.

Antonio Gramsci's cultural hegemony, as this thesis identifies, would perfectly confirm the argument of cultural Imperialism made by Zhu. Unlike political hegemony which is operated through a well established and mechanical system, this thesis would suggest that cultural hegemony is conducted by cultural communication and other associated events within a civil society as an organic movement to develop cultural discourses. This idea of cultural hegemony has developed even further to describe the circumstances created by Western powers, in which the West delivers its values and culture as universal beliefs, and imposes them on so-called Third World countries through the media and treaties. Consequently, cultural hegemony becomes a synonym when analysing Orientalism and post- (or neo-) Imperialism.

So, what is Western Imperialism in relation to Eastern culture? According to Said, at some very basic level, Imperialism means a pattern of thinking, as well as the way of settling down and controlling land that you do not possess that is remote, and that is lived on and owned by others.<sup>36</sup> In Zhu's definition, Imperialism not only includes the traditional explanation of military expansion, colonialism, occupation, foreign dominion, economic exploitation towards other countries etc., but also includes the invading of cultures and nations: a pattern of thinking. Moreover, J. Ellen Gainor describes in *Imperialism and Theatre* (1995) Imperialism as a transnational and transhistorical phenomenon. It happens neither in restricted areas nor at one certain moment. Accordingly, Imperialism

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<sup>36</sup> Said, 1993:5

can be seen in regulatory codes, periodical articles, commentaries and translations of Eastern works by Orientalists.

The concept of cultural Imperialism has also been supported by a statement as mentioned below. On 13 June 1910, a British politician A. J. Balfour (a former Prime Minister 1902-5)<sup>37</sup> clearly proclaimed in a speech in the House of Commons that it was unnecessary to argue who was more powerful or weaker since a power was a wise man who completely understood knowledge, could explain everything, control everything, and have as its inside objective the fact that we are the Masters and 'Others' are Servants who could be represented by us.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike Balfour, whose notions of Orientals pretended to unfold objective universality, Cromer<sup>39</sup> claimed that Orientals are specifically who he had dominated, first in India, then in Egypt for the twenty-five years after he appeared as the paramount consul general during the English Empire era. Cromer defined Balfour's Orientals as subject races, the topic of a long essay published in the *Edinburgh Review* in January 1908. Once again, knowledge of subject races, or Orientals, is what makes their management achievable and useful. Accordingly, knowledge gives power; more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control.

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<sup>37</sup> A.J. (Arthur James) Balfour (1848–1930), British Conservative politician, prime minister.

<sup>38</sup> Zhu, 1997:148-9

<sup>39</sup> England's representative in Egypt, Egypt's master, was Evelyn Baring in 1907, who later became Lord Cromer.

So far as this thesis has approached the long-developing core value of knowledge, that knowledge is academic, effective, sensible and practical, which Cromer and Balfour inherited from a century of modern Western Orientalism. This inheritance is knowledge about and the understanding of Orientals, including the races, characters, culture, history, traditions, social development, and possibilities, which was so useful that Cromer had employed it in ruling Egypt. For all practical purposes, moreover, as Said stated, since 'Orientals' were a Platonic element that any Orientalist would possibly test, understand, and expose, Orientalism had been experimented with and become everlasting knowledge. Thus, in Cromer's two-volume work *Modern Egypt*, he mentions, in Chapter 34, the magisterial record on his experience and achievement. Cromer also wrote his personal canon of Orientalist wisdom:

Sir Alfred Lyall once said to me: 'Accuracy is abhorrent to the Oriental mind. Every Anglo-Indian should always remember that maxim.' Want of accuracy, which easily degenerates into untruthfulness, is in fact the main characteristic of the Oriental mind. (Said, 1978:38)

In fact, as Edgar Quinet described, Orientalist ideas took many different forms during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. First, for example, in Europe there was a great amount of literature about the Orient inherited from ancient Europe. The characteristic works of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which is the period when modern Orientalism is supposed to have begun, are the representation of an Oriental renaissance taking place. Then, with such experiences as Napoleon's Orient, an identity of knowledge in the West was modernised, and this was a second form of Orientalism in the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries. In fact, Oriental studies were carried out by many reputable institutions during the nineteenth century such as the Royal Asiatic Society, Société Asiatique etc.

Afterward, as Said (1978) mentioned, little of these studies and very few of these institutions in which Orientalism evolved into the third stage of development remained and flourished freely. Thus, Orientalism forced limits on ideas about the Orient. Indeed, in the third form of Orientalism, as Said suggested, even the most imaginative writers like Flaubert, Nerval or Scott were constrained in what they could either experience or express about the Orient. Thus, this thesis would suggest that Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality, which structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (Orient, the East, 'them'). Moreover, there was also no possibility for anything outside of a political master-slave relationship to create the Orientalised Orient, as was described in detail by Anwar Abdel Malek in Said's *Orientalism*.

Considered by Orientalism, the Orient and Orientals, as an 'object' of study, stamped with an otherness on the level of the *problematic position*, but of a constitutive otherness, of an essentialist character. All that is different whether it be 'subject' or 'object.' Besides, the Orientalists, on the level of the *thematic*, take an essentialist's idea about the countries, nations and people in the Orient under study. A notion expressing itself by a characterised ethnic typology will soon process it towards racism. (Said, 1978:96-97)

The implication between 'thematic' and 'problematic position,' as Malek mentioned above, reveals the controversial relationship between representing

and represented in the context of intercultural practices. It has even gone further to explain the connection between Festival critics and Ninagawa and Kunju's *Macbeth* as well as the Festival programme itself. Here, Orientalism is like a mirror to reflect the intricate realities within the intercultural phenomenon.

Even so, Europe did not learn of Oriental theatre by means of translation and performance until the middle of the eighteenth century. This contact came much later than other cultural contacts, and it was only in the eighteenth century that documents in this area became available. Scholars find it difficult to understand why this contact came about so late. A fact that confounded the issue more was that, for the West, the understanding of East-West cultural exchanges depended on ambiguous and incorrect information. Particularly, a number of theatres depended on 'word of mouth' and 'mental processes' more than written histories.

Later, the situation was enriched and complicated by the fact that the Orient, particularly the so-called Near East, was a favourite place for Europeans to travel and commentate during the entire nineteenth century. Moreover, there developed a huge body of Oriental-style European literature mostly based on personal experiences in the Orient.

Although the development of Orientalism has been discussed by Edward Said and Edgar Quinet, what did the Orient mean in the nineteenth century for the major Western Powers? First of all, think about the differences between the English and the French. The Orient for the former was India for sure, a British



possession; therefore, passing through the Near East meant passing along the route to their colony. Then, the room available for imaginative play was restricted by the realities of administration, territorial legality, and the power of authority. But the French pilgrim was imbued with a sense of acute loss in the Orient. Unlike Britain, France came to a place where she had no sovereign presence. From the Crusades to Napoleon, the Mediterranean, India, Canada and the USA echoed with the sounds of French defeats. What was 'la mission civilisatrice' gradually started in the nineteenth century as a political second-best to Britain's presence.

Consequently, French pilgrims from Constantin-François Volney onward imagined and ruminated about places that were principally in their minds. They attempted to construct a scheme of typical French or Europeanness, and even a concert in the Orient was supposed to be orchestrated by them. In addition, there was the Orient of memories, forgotten mysteries, suggestive ruins, hidden correspondences, and a virtuous human model; an Orient whose most skilful literary styles would be discovered in Nerval and Flaubert, whose works were solidly positioned in an imaginative and unreal dimension.

These distinct creations of Orientalism resulted in different contexts between British and French experts. The former manages an actual conjunction of people and territory, whereas the latter dealt with a realm of spiritual possibility. As Maurice Barrès described in his *Une Enquête aux pays du Levant*, the French presence was best seen in French schools where, as he says of a school in

Alexandria, 'it is ravishing to see those little Oriental girls welcoming and so wonderfully reproducing the *fantaisie* fancy, imagination and the melody in their spoken French of the Ile-de-French' (Said, 1978:244-245). If France does not have many colonies in the Orient, this thesis would suggest it does not mean she is entirely without possessions. For Barrès:

There is, there in the Orient, a feeling about France which is so religious and strong that it is capable of absorbing and reconciling all our most diverse aspirations. In the Orient we represent spirituality, justice, and the category of the ideal. England is powerful there; Germany is all-powerful; but we possess Oriental souls. (Said, 1978:244-245)

This statement can be questioned as to whether that is why some French-related artists are so keen to approach Eastern intangible heritages such as the Asian theatrical tradition. For instance, two of the most outstanding figures in the field of Euro-American intercultural theatre practices have received both French and British ideological heritages. Renowned director, Ariane Mnouchkine<sup>40</sup> fused Kabuki, Indonesian and Beijing Opera styles with Western techniques in her productions of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and *Richard II*. Moreover, Peter Brook<sup>41</sup> was raising the most controversial arguments when directing one of the Indian epics – *Mahabharata*, which set alight the debate on the ethics of such practices.

Since intercultural theatre practice has been developed by Western artists for the purpose of breaking through Western theatre's conventions and limitations,

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<sup>40</sup> Ariane Mnouchkine was educated in England for her university degree before turning to the theatre.

<sup>41</sup> Although Peter Brook is British, he has resided in Paris for thirty-five years.

what is this new trend located in the field of contemporary theatre studies?

According to Patrice Pavis in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996)

In short, not only has intercultural theatre still not been constituted as a recognized territory, but we are even unsure as to whether or not its future already lies behind it. Consequently, it might be more productive to speak of intercultural exchanges within theatre practice rather than of the constitution of a new genre emerging from the synthesis of heterogeneous traditions. In this way, Erika Fischer-Lichte is perhaps ultimately right when she affirms that it is still too soon to propose a global theory of intercultural theatre. (Pavis, 1996:1)

Besides, Rustom Bharucha stated in *Theatre and the World – Performance and the Politics of Culture* (1990), that when compared with Internationalism, Interculturalism is a new 'ism,' and it contains more possibilities of relationships that overwhelm the differences between cultures such as history, race, language and time. However, this new school needs to be strongly contested as it represents the essence of Imperialism in the realm of culture. Moreover, Brian Singleton further explained in *Interculturalism* that

Interculturalism and performance is perhaps the most talked about and controversial cultural practice of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, characterized at best by a sharing and mutual borrowing of the manifestation of one theatre's practice by another. At worst it features the appropriation and annihilation of indigenous, pre-modern practices in traditional societies by rapacious 'First World' global capitalism...This artistic practice came at a time of European colonialism and expansion into the Far East. New trade routes permitted the shipping back of foreign goods and artifacts, as well as an obsession with what was not understood or not permitted for the Westerner... (2003:628)

Based on Bharucha and Singleton's statements, however, how is this 'appropriation' and 'annihilation' of the indigenous represented by theatrical practice within Western Imperialist ideology? As Patrice Pavis in *The*

*Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996) states, intercultural theatre creates hybrid forms through the 'conscious' and 'voluntary' fusing of different cultural traditions. Furthermore, the features of original forms are absorbed by this hybridisation and become indistinguishable. Clive Barker also explained in his *The Possibilities and Politics of Intercultural Penetration and Exchange* (1991) as reported in Pavis' *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996):

At the heart of all considerations of intercultural penetration and exchange one is forced to make the choice between a global village and a world of differences. And central to this is the nature of the context in which the interpenetration and/or exchange takes place. (Pavis, 1996:251)

Nevertheless, the choice between a global village and a world of differences has always been a problematic issue when Western artists practise their theatre works within the ideology of Western Interculturalism. In order to refresh the languishing forms in European contemporary theatre, Asia has become a wonderland for artists to appropriate theatrical concepts and techniques. Besides, this interpenetration and/or exchange is unjust, as Barker (1991) argues that:

Throughout the period there are few recorded instances where any consideration was given to the culture from which the techniques and influences were appropriated. If we can characterize this form of cultural interpenetration as giving without taking, then there is also a complementary neo-colonialist process of *taking without giving*. (Pavis, 1996:251)

This argument of 'taking without giving' is reflected in the ideologies of familiar and foreign; Us and Others in Orientalism. Besides, when this ideology is

expanded, then the result will be just as it appears to Levinas (1946. 1972) or Finkelkraut (1987) that:

Platonism has been conquered thanks to the same methods which Western thought has provided, which found how to understand specific cultures which never understood themselves. (Pavis, 1996:12)

Levinas and Finkelkraut's concept towards cultural exchange between West and East might be inherited from well-established prejudices in the West. For example, Silvestre de Sacy always made it clear that the Orient did not provide on its own a European's taste for such things as Arabic poetry, but what he was trying to say was that Arabic poetry had to be properly translated by the Orientalist before it could be appreciated.

Consequently, Levinas, Finkelkraut and Sacy's statements seem again to make a connection between Western Interculturalism and Orientalism. As Gang Zhu says in his *Sa Yi De — Edward W. Said* (1997), simplistic understanding should be avoided while talking about Orientalism. It includes not only all the text about Orient by the West, but also the Oriental research in political agendas submitted by Western scholars. Furthermore, it should not be identified as diplomacy for the West to dominate the Orient. Of course all the above is included within Orientalism. But Orientalism, for Said, as this thesis agrees, should first be interpreted as the benefit aggregation of the West, and, in the geographical consciousness of the West, as the acculturation in the text of various fields such

as aestheticism, academe, economy, sociology, history, and philosophy.<sup>42</sup>

Orientalism is premised upon exteriority. It is a fact that the Orientalist, no matter whether dramaturges or artists, makes the Orient speak and represents it, as well as rendering its mysteries to the West.

The Orientalist is never concerned with the Orient except as the first cause of what he says and writes. What is said or written is meant to indicate that the Orientalist is outside the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact. Of course the principal product of this exteriority is representation, for such representations, *as representations*, are not natural descriptions about the Orient. The exteriority of the representation was, for a long time, dominated by the truth that if the Orient could possibly represent itself, it would. However, since it could not, representation did the job, both for the West and for the poor Orient. Whether or not it is conscious, intercultural theatre practices have to face a critical decision for appropriating without misrepresenting the Others.

For Said, the representation is part of a theatrical idea that the Orient is a stage on which the entire East is confined. On the stage will appear figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. Therefore, the Orient seems to be not an open extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field – a theatrical stage affixed to Europe. According to this idea, an Orientalist is just a talented expert in knowledge, for which Europe at

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<sup>42</sup> Said, 1978:142

large is responsible. Thus, an audience is both historically and culturally responsible for dramas that are technically put together by the dramatist.

Moreover, the European imagination towards the East was developed mainly from Orientalism. For example, between the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century major authors like Ariosto, Milton, Marlowe, Tasso, and Shakespeare, drew on the Orient's riches for their productions in ways that sharpened the outlines of imagery, ideas and the figures populating it.

Furthermore, forms of Oriental theatre have also been influencing some major artists in modern Western theatre because of a cultural exchange between the East and West. There are four fine and typical examples: Bertolt Brecht, Antonin Artaud, Ariane Mnouchkine and Peter Brook. In fact, it can be suggested that the forms of Eastern theatre inspired the avant-garde revolution in Western theatre. This borrowing or exchange should also be regarded as a two-way street and equal interaction which was based on a mutual reciprocity of needs. This concept is as Raymond Williams stated, that 'one must locate the foreign elements present and determine from what context these particles in suspension have been extracted' (Pavis, 1996:16). However, Williams' concept seems to be idealistic, and far away from the restrictions of reality. Consequently, when applied to theatre, the intercultural debate has great difficulty in remaining on the level of equality of cultures and exchanges in terms of any universality of cultural communication. The reality in cultural exchange between West and East has become as Rustom Bharucha stated: 'They cannot represent themselves; they

must be represented. *We can represent ourselves; we are represented.*' (Pavis, 1996:199)

As a renowned scholar, Rustom Bharucha is always criticising the appropriation of Indian cultural heritage by the Western artists within the phenomenon of interculturalism. Based on his argument towards Western Interculturalism, he wrote:

I should emphasize that my critique of Western (mis)use of the Indian theatre is not based solely on aesthetic criteria. What concerns me is the ethics of representation underlying any cross-cultural exchange, and the social relationships that constitute it. (Bharucha, 1990:3-4)

Although Patrice Pavis seems to disagree that physical intercultural works should be analysed in the realm of intangible cultural identities, the issue of Interculturalism has been a popular subject for scholars to explore its underlying connections with ethics and identity. The following section will start to explore the complicity between Orientalism and theatre works with a Chinese theme within the phenomenon of Interculturalism.

### **3.2 The Implication of Chinese Theatre Works in the West**

All the exploration and arguments above mainly regard the relationship between the West and East in general. In order to test the hypothesis of whether the Festival Directors, critics and audiences were driven by the ideology of Orientalism towards Asian theatre, this subsection will dig in-depth into the conceptions of Japan and China becoming involved in intercultural theatrical



practice, with special emphasis on the Chinese aspect.

In the twentieth century, the influence of Asian culture on Western thinking still occurred largely in the theatre, and mostly in America. *Madame Butterfly*, scripted and directed in 1900 by David Belasco, a virtuoso of Naturalism in American drama, presented a love story between an Imperialist American Petty Officer and a compliant Japanese girl. After four years, this story was adapted by Giacomo Puccini and became the world-famous opera *Madame Butterfly*. Thus, the pattern of romance between an Oriental and a Westerner is stereotyped and seems to go on forever.

The success of *Madame Butterfly* on early-twentieth-century Broadway led to an enthusiasm for presenting Oriental themes on American stages. *Madame Butterfly* not only represented the unequal status within the ideology of Western Interculturalism of the United States and Japan, but also provided an influential pattern for other materials that reflected the relationship between the West and the East, in which the West predominates. This situation was proved by Fischer-Lichte *et al.* in their *The Dramatic Touch of Difference. Theatre, Own and Foreign*:

The starting point for intercultural staging is thus not primarily an interest in the foreign – the foreign theatre or the foreign culture from which it is taken – but rather a situation completely specific within its own culture or a completely specific problem having its origin within its own theatre. (Pavis, 1996:11)

With no exception, the reality of Orientalism within Western intercultural practice is also employable when the practice poaches elements from Chinese culture.

Chinese theatrical arts have been hugely appropriated by Western artists for the purpose of either revitalising a devitalised realism or meeting audiences' fantasies. The latter one is more popular in commercial theatre, especially on Broadway, and happens through poaching Chinese texts and adapting them to meet audience expectations. As the French director Jacques Nichet mentioned in *Pour La légèreté des formes*, when they work on a Chinese subject, they just distort and recreate it without considering the culture of origin. The reason for this disregard is said to be the achievement of artistic freedom.<sup>43</sup>

In response to this 'distortion' and disregard towards the culture of origin, Rustom Bharucha once said in *Theatre and the World – Performance and the Politics of Culture*:

It is bad enough when a text like *Shakuntala* (the source of so many myths of Indian grace, wisdom, romance) is decontextualized from its aesthetic and social context, but it is worse when a traditional performance is stripped of its links to the lives of the people for whom it is performed. (1990:4-5)

Bharucha raised a very strong argument here as he pointed out that the result of this borrowing/appropriation by Western intercultural practice is to cut the roots of Eastern traditions from their origins. He also argued that most Western interculturalists have tacitly, and even resolutely, ignored the relationship between indigenous culture and its owners. Whereas interculturalists who are only concerned with the achievement of their artistic effect and do not care

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<sup>43</sup> Pavis, 1996:12-13

whether or not the elements they appropriated from the indigenous culture have been misrepresented have removed those elements even farther from their original social and cultural contexts. Bharucha's notion here illustrates how Western Interculturalism distorts the realities of original cultures.

For the identification of the realities of how artists both in the West and the East view their intercultural theatre practices by appropriating foreign elements, the exploration in this thesis will be in sequence and divided into three stages. According to Wen-chuan Du (2002), the pattern of distortion within intercultural theatre practice on Broadway had continued to the 1980s and was not subverted until *M. Butterfly*, written by David Henry Hwang. Hwang dealt with familiar material in a brand new way by subverting the conventional relationship between an Oriental and a Westerner.

Therefore, from *Madame Butterfly* in 1900 to *M. Butterfly* in 1988, the staging of American dramatic presentations on the subject of China that adopted elements of the expression of traditional Chinese drama, became differently structured, and a unique, historical period has unfolded as a result. Under these circumstances, Chinese 'subjects' have been studied by Western Orientalists, and represented by theatre artists.

Since this thesis aims to investigate whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre practices, it is necessary to explore the reality of how Westerners adapted Chinese culture to favour their audiences' tastes. Accordingly, the first

two stages of this exploration will focus on the subject of Chinese issues in Broadway productions. There is still a shortage of discussion and representative Chinese works on the British stage. In contrast, Broadway has more experience of offering audiences thoughts on Oriental fantasy. One might argue that the circumstances happening in the US cannot represent the West as a whole. However, it is undeniable that Edinburgh International Festival, as an intercultural platform, has held a very strong connection with America throughout the Festival's history through its programming perspective. Frank Dunlop – the major focus for the exploration in this thesis – was a very successful director in New York. Furthermore, Broadway has also had a strong influence on Western audiences' expectations of Chinese subjects, not only by its huge investment in Chinese themed productions, but also by the size of the audience it attracts.

Consequently, the first stage deals with intercultural performance from the Western point of view. This stage includes the concept of romance in which *East Is West* and *The World of Suzie Wong* will be explored. The representation of Chinese texts will be identified by the productions of *The Yellow Jacket* and *Lute Song* and will be discussed in Chapter 3.2.2. The next stage is intercultural performance from the Sino-American perspective. In this case, *M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang – a descendant of Chinese immigrants in America – will be a good example for discussion in Chapter 3.2.3. The final stage is to identify the reality of artists' viewpoints in their intercultural works and whether they perceive their intercultural performance as from authentic Eastern standpoint;

the productions of *Macbeth* by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre will be salient examples for examination in Chapter 4.

### 3.2.1 The Intercultural Performance from the Western Point of View:

#### Romance on Stage

Due to the success of David Belasco's *Madame Butterfly*, there was a series of dramas and musicals on Broadway on the subject of romance between the Chinese and Westerners. They are, chronologically, *Chinese Honeymoon* (1902), *Chin-Chin* (1914), *East Is West* (1918), *The Rose of China* (1919), *Lady of the Lamp* (1920), *Bridge of Distance* (1925), *Shanghai Gestures* (1926), *Marco Millions* (1920), *Chinese O'Neill* (1920), and *The World of Suzie Wong* (1958). Those plays were all very successful. Almost every play involved a romance between a Westerner and a Chinese person. Usually the Westerner was the pursuer and his fantasy was a Chinese girl, and it always turned out in the end that the Chinese girl fell in love with the Westerner.

In this subject, there are two dramas that are most familiar to American audiences: *East Is West* (1918) by Samuel Shipman with the collaboration of John B. Hymer, and *The World of Suzie Wong* (1958) by Paul Osborn. They were both successful at the box office and were made into films. *East Is West* is about a romance between Billy Benson, the son of the American Ambassador to China, and a Chinese girl, Ming Toy. Benson rescues Ming Toy twice and falls in love with her; however, he cannot marry her because of their different races. Then, they found that Ming Toy was not Chinese, but rather a Spanish

missionary's daughter who had been kidnapped while young. Thus this story had a happy ending – Benson is at last able to marry Ming Toy.

One critic indicated that this story was almost a rehash of *Madame Butterfly* by David Belasco but that a different, and obviously happy, ending was forcibly added. Just as Pinkerton wins *Madame Butterfly* by giving her freedom, Benson saves Ming Toy twice. The characteristics of Ming Toy's persona are typical of American theatre representations of Chinese girls during that period and very present today, which correspond to the Western male perception of Chinese girls. In the *New York Times*, John Corbin's critique of this show's premiere indicates that the leading actress is just the 'little heathen' whom we usually see in the musical comedies of the previous twenty-five years, who is always pretty, adorable, and coquettish, speaks slang and cuss words, and also wears long trousers. When she wants to obtain her American lover, she betrays her own religion. When she runs for her life from the hooligans of Chinatown, the 'battle' in the Third Act starts – she becomes a tragic heroine with the characteristics of both impatience and glamour.<sup>44</sup> Obviously, Ming Toy is characterized as an adorable and docile girl while facing the West, but a brave and strong woman while facing the Chinese. She is named Ming Toy – whether intentionally or not as this thesis would suggest, this name implies that she is, for Westerners, just a precious Ming Dynasty antique-like doll.

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<sup>44</sup> Corbin J. (1918), *New York Times: Dramatic Reviews*, T-NBL 1918-1919, p.146

This is a happy ending for the Westerner, but a tragedy for the Chinese or Asian, since the play demonstrates that Chinese men are criminally-minded barbarians and that Chinese or Asian women are happiest when being fantasy objects created and 'owned' by white men. Therefore, they will never be on an equal footing with whites. In Du's opinion, if the happy ending is not forcibly added, the white man Benson will pawn off Ming Toy in the end, in the same way that Pinkerton gives Madame Butterfly the slip. Thus, the title *East Is West* is somehow ironic. This thesis suggests that the title should be interpreted as it was conceived: from the Western point of view. Only when the people of the East accept the roles given to them by Westerners can the East be on the same level as the West.

This argument is also confirmed by the experience of Jing-xian Zhang, a performer in Kunju *Macbeth*. Zhang recalled after one of the performances of *The Peony Pavilion* in Edinburgh in 1987, a female member of the audience came backstage and argued that she could not identify with the story, 'In the West, no woman will die for extreme love-sickness as the character did, even if the figure is living only in her dream.'<sup>45</sup> Since there are divergent cultural traditions between China and the West in general, it is not surprising why Broadway has to modify the plots in favour of the audience's taste. These modifications result in the conclusion of this thesis that only when the East becomes the West can the East be received and appreciated by the West.

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<sup>45</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Jing-xian Zhang, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.9.

The same circumstance also occurs in Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth*, two contrastive productions. As Ninagawa follows the pith of Shakespeare's concept, Lady Macbeth in Ninagawa's production is extremely luscious. The interaction between Macbeth and his wife is extroverted and sensual. Whereas, the personality of Lady Macbeth in Kunju's performance conforms with a traditional Chinese female character, and the interaction with her husband is introverted and conservative. That is why western audiences can identify with Ninagawa's *Macbeth*, but not Kunju's.

Returning to the subject of successful Western plays with central Chinese characters, in critical circles, *The World of Suzie Wong* is compared with David Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* and is regarded as the modern version of *East Is West*. The resemblance between *The World of Suzie Wong* and *East Is West* is that they both describe a romance between a white man and a Chinese girl. Suzie Wong became the white Ben Jephcott's kept woman. Like Pinkerton discarding *Madam Butterfly* without remorse, Ben Jephcott leaves Suzie Wong all alone. At last, Robert Lomax, a young white artist who loves Suzie Wong, marries her, and so she is rescued. As a critic said, this Pinkerton did not really discard his 'Chinese Madame Butterfly.'<sup>46</sup> It is interesting that this play starts with the platitude of a Chinese woman being discarded by a white man, and ends with her rescue by another white man.

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<sup>46</sup> Coleman R., 'Suzie Wong'-- *Do All Right*, Daily Mirror 15 October 1958



Apparently, *The World of Suzie Wong* makes for East meeting West on stage. Some critics think this play contradicts gently and eloquently the notion that 'East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.'<sup>47</sup> Considering at a deeper level, in Du's concept, this sort of acculturation between East and West is built on the affectation that the West patronisingly tolerates the East. Practically, as this play unfolds, the change of political reality does bring enlightenment in the drama, but it does not get rid of the stereotype of the Chinese on the American stage.

In conclusion, the prime pattern of romance between the Chinese and the Westerner, in drama, is obviously established on the condition that the 'male' West dominates a complaisant, 'female' China. According to Wen-chuan Du in his *Bailaohui De Zhongguo Ticai Yu Zhongguo Xiqu (Chinese Stories and Operas in Broadway)* (2002), any literature must serve two functions: to reflect either the writer's views or the attitudes of society, or both. In other words, those playwrights merging their own views into works might be affected by contemporary social concepts and reflect a certain social phenomenon in their works. It is sure that they sometimes criticise society. Such plays are mostly good box office and run for a long time. This means that American audiences not only enjoy hearing about the West taming the East, but also accept the way that Western drama presents this subject.

What is presented on the stage is also found in popular culture, because both

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<sup>47</sup> McClain J., *A Tender Drama That Can Survive*, *Journal of American* 15 October 1958

fields naturally affect one another. Playwright David Henry Hwang expressly sees a formal difference between the stages of East and West:

In popular culture, 'good' Asian women are those who serve the White protagonist in his battle against her own people, often sleeping with him in the process. Stallone's *Rambo II*, Cimino's *Year of the Dragon*, Clavell's *Shogun*, Van Lustbader's *The Ninja* are all familiar examples. Now, our considerations of race and sex intersect with the issue of Imperialism. For this formula – good natives serve Whites, bad natives rebel – is consistent with the mentality of colonialism. Because they are submissive and obedient, good natives of both sexes necessarily take on 'feminine' characteristics in a colonialist world...The neo-colonialist notion that good elements of a native society, like a good woman, desire submission to the masculine West speaks precisely to the heart of our foreign policy blunders in Asia and elsewhere. (Hwang, 1988:99)

Imperialism is raised again here by Hwang to indicate the inequitable position between West and East within the intercultural phenomenon. This argument is also confirmed with the concepts mentioned above as cultural hegemony by Antonio Gramsci, Cultural Imperialism by Gang Zhu and Orientalism by Edward Said. Consequently, in those intercultural practices, dramatists and artists were just like so-called Orientalists who represented the Oriental world in favour of their audiences' imagination. On the other hand, those dramatists and artists also influence audiences' expectations of the Oriental world.

Based on Said's theory, this thesis suggests that certain subjects are repeated consistently within certain genres of presentation. One of them shows that the Orient is a place of pilgrimage, and it is also the vision of the Orient as spectacle. Every work on the Orient in these categories tries to characterize the place, but the most interesting thing shown in the work is the extent to which the work's internal structure is displayed in some measure as synonymous with an

understandable interpretation of the Orient. Not surprisingly, this interpretation is mostly a form of restructuring the Orient as Romantic, a revision that restores and redeems it to the present, as each reinterpretation means a rebuilding. All in all, the evidence reveals the implicit associations of the artists who represented their Eurocentrism in their Chinese thematic works. This Eurocentric ideology has also been shown to be inherent in the programming strategy in EIF over its history as well as Western Interculturalism in general, as mentioned before. Following, the different types of Orientalist prejudice within Broadway's Chinese thematic works will be addressed.

### **The Representation of Chinese Texts**

The United States has vastly increased its contact with the Orient since the nineteenth century. For North Americans, ancient China had been a place full of fantasy and romantic images. The Chinese-themed works imagined or composed by North American writers were mainly made in between the two World Wars, and afterwards they were still produced often. Those writers were much enamoured of ancient China as well as its traditions, and their perception of that culture is reflected in the repertoire, including *The Yellow Jacket* (1912), *Chinese Love* (1921), *Chinese Lantern* (1922), *Flame of Love* (1924), *Chinese Rose* (1925), *Kuan Yin* (1926), *Chee-Chee* (1928), *Chinese Nightingale*, *Earth Journey* (1944), *Lute Song* (1944), and *The Legend of Wu Chang* (1977) (adapted from *The Yellow Jacket*). In these the *dramatis personae* are emperors, princes, princesses, fairies, eunuchs, intellectuals, gentlemen, and so

on. They wear exotic clothing and are poetic and distinguished. They usually center on a romance that takes place in ancient China. They create, on the stage, an exotic theatrical spectacle, which is one of the products of Orientalism. The production of *The Yellow Jacket* was the first “Chinese” written and directed by Americans, and is also the one that enjoyed the best box office takings. It was written by George C. Hazelton and J. Harry Benrimo, and directed by the latter. It creates a mythical China, in which there are many characters with compliant dispositions — a disposition not possible in Chinese theatre. The language of the play is gnomic and elegant, which soon became an ideal of the American-made ‘Chinese’ repertoire, and other plays written afterwards mostly followed the same pattern. Arthur Hobson Quinn claims that this play is a Chinese play composed in a ‘Chinese style’<sup>48</sup> and states in his *A History of American Drama* that *The Yellow Jacket* is successful in both artistic aspects and at the box office.<sup>49</sup>

It is a story about revenge within the royal family of ancient China. Although Benrimo did not mention the origin of this story, it is observable that its beginning and ending are very similar to those of *Zhao Shi Gu Er* (趙氏孤兒 – *Orphan of The Zhao's*), a thirteenth century Yuan Za-Ju<sup>50</sup> piece (from the Yuan

<sup>48</sup> J. Harry Benrimo and George C. Hazelton (1913), *The Yellow Jacket*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, p. cover

<sup>49</sup> Arthur Hobson Quinn (1955), *A History of the American Drama, from the Civil War to the Present Day*, Second Edition Vol.2, New York: Irvington Publishers Inc. p. 132

<sup>50</sup> Yuan Za-Ju (元雜劇): a form of performing art in Yuan, meaning the Yuan Dynasty (1206—1368AD), developed through many centuries, this form of traditional Chinese performing art became a mature style during the Yuan Dynasty, and was called Za-Ju. The Za-Ju performing style includes music, dance, performance and recitation.

Dynasty, China). *Zhao Shi Gu Er* and *The Yellow Jacket* both present a typical plot of Chinese revenge, which shows endurance for completing a great vocation and how the righteous man defeats evil.

If we analyse and compare the plotlines of *Zhao Shi Gu Er* and *The Yellow Jacket*, the former is full of violence such as murder and revenge, which in Du's opinion, is actually too acrimonious for Western audiences; the latter is a story of ancestor spirits and revenge, and also presents the power of love, which is obviously derived from Western culture, particularly American culture. In conventional Chinese plots, romance usually interferes with revenge; however, in *The Yellow Jacket*, love is all. Thus, considering both the subject and its reception, *The Yellow Jacket* is a product which mixes Chinese and American cultures, where the latter is more influential than the former. *The Yellow Jacket* attempts to present delicate, poetic, and gentle emotions, which are represented by the symbolic names of the *dramatis personae*, cute and poetic language, and the feminising of the *personas'* characters.

In the writers' perspective, China is a glamorous country, which leads them to depict China as a fairy-like kingdom. This perspective, also employed for poeticising language, is mostly concocted. Although J. Harry Benrimo says that some philosophical words spoken by certain *personae* in this play are selected from the translation of traditional Chinese wise aphorisms, their selection does not really represent Chinese philosophy. In Du's opinion, the romantic lines of the leading actor are particularly Americanised. The language in this play is too

rhetorical as well as ingratiating, and utilizes the audience's false idea of China to achieve a pseudo-Chinese atmosphere.

J. Harry Benrimo, one of the authors of this play, later acknowledged that their choice to mix evil *personae* with gentle characters actually does not exist in Chinese drama, but they needed to use it to present the Oriental aesthetics.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, Benrimo clarifies that Western people always subjectively thought that the Oriental character was feminine. Thus, in order to create a Chinese atmosphere, femininity had to be emphasized in some roles. Following this idea, neither the positive nor negative roles in the play are shaped as characteristic of traditional roles in Chinese drama, especially since the evil character is not killed in this play; instead, he is somewhat accepted, ending up in captivity in his favourite garden. Thus the fierce fighting and bloody Chinese revenge story is reduced to a cute, formal Orientalist play.

Whether conscious or unconscious, the creation of *The Yellow Jacket* represents the prejudiced ideology in the West. This prejudiced ideology is, as this thesis accepts Said's theory, a pervasive misunderstanding of Asians in the West through the application of Orientalism to actual Asian cultures; this manifests by neglecting to look for correspondence between the language used to describe the Orient and the Orient itself, and by rarely making any consistent effort to be precise. Moreover, what might be done in this kind of performance is to characterise the Orient as foreign and place it on a theatrical stage, with stage

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<sup>51</sup> Benrimo J. H., *The Facts about 'The Yellow Jacket,'* New York Times, 4 November 1928

technicians, manager, audience, and actors of European descent, for a Western audience only. This argument is supported by Peter Brook's intercultural theatre work of *Mahabharata*, which production was mainly for Western audiences, and never came back to its origin – India - for the questionable reason of financial shortage.

Not only do the so-called Chinese productions written by Americans contain fairy-tale exoticism, but also their adaptations of Chinese originals reflect a romantic tendency. There have been many traditional Chinese dramas performed on American stages since the beginning of the twentieth century. Among those, the only fully American adaptation is *Lute Song*, since it was completely adapted by an American writer. Because *Lute Song* is based on *Pi Pa Ji* (琵琶記), one of the most celebrated Chinese classic dramas, it is particularly meaningful to see it being translated and performed on Broadway. *Pi Pa Ji* was composed by Ming Gao (高明, 1307-ca.1371) in 1360, around the end of the Yuan Dynasty and the beginning of the Ming Dynasty. As soon as his manuscript was published, the First Emperor of the Ming Dynasty was very impressed; thus, it became one of the most popular classic Chinese dramas.

The subject of the Chinese version of *Pi Pa Ji* is filial piety, which is the concept that it is children's responsibility to be amenable to their parents, take care of them while they are alive, keep their memory after they pass away, please them as ancestors by their own success and honours, and so on. In the play, Wu-niang Zhao's (趙五娘) morality assails her husband's mistake; Yong Cai's (蔡邕)

accusation of being impious is relieved by his being loyal to the Emperor, supporting his hometown, and worshipping his parents. Through filial piety, Yong Cai and Wu-niang Zhao are tied together. Ji Niu (牛姬) – Cai married Ji Niu as his second wife without divorcing Zhao – also presents her piety when she meets Zhao; she feels shamefaced for not tending to her parents-in-law. In *Pi Pa Ji*, filial piety is the axis joining all the characters together.

Although *Lute Song* is based on *Pi Pa Ji*, the subject of filial piety is played down and the focus is on romantic love instead. Of course, the idea of piety is mentioned in the plot, but it is not the motivation for the major characters' behaviour; instead, the loyal love between Yong Cai and Wu-niang Zhao becomes the basis of the *personae's* personalities. Most critiques do not focus on filial piety when discussing *Lute Song*. Although some critics mention the leading character's selfishness, others think of the play as an eternal romance triangle or loyal love story. Also, there are some criticisms about love, grief, suffering, loyalty, and guilt in this play. Even if some critics notice the leading lady's self-denial, they still do not mention anything about filial piety.<sup>52</sup> Although those elements in American criticisms can be found in the Chinese original, filial piety as Chinese traditional morality is not accurately transmitted to the American audience.

George Jean Nathan mentioned, in his review of the Broadway premiere, the change from the subject of piety to that of love. In view of Nathan's

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<sup>52</sup> New York Drama Critics Circle Awards, Vol. 7 (1946), pp. 459-462



understanding of the original, he was the only critic who noticed the subject change. However, he thinks that the adaptation focusing on the subject of love is not only reasonable, but also revolutionary. The idea of piety in the original took up too much room, apparently, so in comparison the adaptation's love story seems more dramatic.<sup>53</sup> Obviously, Nathan expresses an American view here: 'the love story intrigues Western audiences more than a story of piety.' (Du, 2002:92)

The love between Yong Cai and Wu-niang Zhao in *Lute Song* is essentially romanticised, showing the different ideas about love and marriage for the Americans and the Chinese. In *Pi Pa Ji*, there are, of course, several scenes depicting endearment between husband and wife. However, the expression of love in Chinese culture is very personal. Thus, married love is usually opposed when it conflicts with family and social duty. Unlike *Lute Song*, *Pi Pa Ji* does not present love as perfect, romantic and spiritual. In this play, their suffering is a test to prove their piety – they are not able to talk about love until they present filial love, which means responsibility and bounden duty are placed first, and personal love is second. Yet *Lute Song* subverts to the relation between filial piety and love as well as the nuances of love of Chinese couples in the original text. The adaptor and director of *Lute Song* tend to interpret the element of love in the original as a wholehearted acknowledgement of love: love is magnificent, love conquers everything. From Du's viewpoint, when the original concept of

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<sup>53</sup> George Jean Nathan, *The Theatre: The Lute, the Trombone and Criticism*, American Mercury Vol. 62 May 1946, p. 588

love is transformed into the subject in *Lute Song*, it represents a kind of mediaeval love established in the love or *caritas* of Christendom.

Marriage and sexual love in the Chinese original is elevated to the land of perfection and spirit, contrasting with physical love. The love between Wu-niang Zhao and Yong Cai is romanticized and intrigues Americans. Mediaeval love has the same character: love is fiery and involves suffering. Though the subject of filial piety is largely eliminated in *Lute Song*, Wu-niang Zhao and Yong Cai's ordeal proves their love is loyal, which shows, in a way, a certain level of mediaeval love. In Christendom, love tolerates and endures everything with hope because human love is based on love from God, which brings people strength. Accordingly, as this thesis argues, in *Lute Song*, love-with-suffering represents love that favours an American audience's tastes.

As Americans adapt *The Yellow Jacket* and *Lute Song*, they reflect the tendency for Chinese traditional dramas to be romanticized or mystified on Broadway. Assuming that those playwrights all claim that their works present Chinese tradition and spirit, they actually are massively affected by the indispensable subject of love on Broadway. The original love element of China is also interpreted in line with the American concept: love is everything. This means that, no matter how exotic the Chinese culture may be, the Chinese and Americans are made to appear to share the same values. This argument also confirms the belief in this thesis that audiences tend to accept productions which with they are familiar, in terms of artistic custom and cultural value. Two

intercultural theatre productions of Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth* will be the examples to explore this proposition in Chapter 4.

Chinese plays like *The Yellow Jacket* and *Lute Song* bring American audiences something different from standard Broadway shows, but it is only presented in the different performing manners (glamorous stage clothes and performance styles), different language (cute aphorisms), and different culture (life style and pattern of thought). When Broadway's passion and imagination tries to present traditional Chinese materials, exoticism becomes the focus in drama and manner in order to attract audiences.

As this thesis mentioned before, *Madame Butterfly* started a new style with a love affair between an Oriental and a Westerner in twentieth century drama. Although it describes romance between an American man and Japanese girl, it becomes a model for romance between Western men and Chinese women in later American intercultural theatre practices. In *Madame Butterfly*, the mist of 'happiness' is a metaphor for Oriental women's complaisance (to Occidental men). Whether or not David Belasco was racially prejudiced, this kind of race issue subjectively exists: the relationship between Captain Pinkerton and Madame Butterfly reflects the Occidental's domination of the Oriental.

No matter the original artistic concept within *Zhao Shi Gu Er* and *Pi Pa Ji*, Said claimed that,

...in knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, that seems to put its origin in a citation or quotation from someone's work on the Orient, a fragment of a text, previous

imagination or stereotype, or a mixture of all... The Orient is a representation of canonical material guided by an aesthetic and executive will capable of producing interest in the reader. (1978:177)

Therefore, according to Napoleon's and de Lesseps' point of views, the Orient, like a fierce lion, was something to be faced. Such an Orient was silent, available to Europe for fulfilling its projects that involved, but were never directly responsible to, the native residents who were unable to oppose the depictions and images created for it. Said thinks that such a relationship between Western writing and Oriental silence is the consequence of and the implication of the West's massive cultural power, which strongly influences the Orient. This thesis believes that Said's statement is again confirmed with the circumstance within Western Interculturalism, as Gramsci insists, of cultural hegemony. This cultural hegemony has also been confirmed by the programming strategy in EIF in which European and North American works dominate most Festival directors' programming policies. But there is another interpretation of this strength, which exists by means of the pressure that the Orientalist meets in tradition and its textual attitude to the Orient; this side exists independently, just as Said's promises that 'this fierce lion will talk back.' (1978: 95) With David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988), this thesis will show how the lion talks back, in the following section.

### **3.2.3 The Intercultural Performance from the Sino-American Perspective**

With its opulent theme and vast concerns, *M. Butterfly* includes the problems of relationship, race, sexuality, Imperialism, and Colonialism. The story is

developed by the use of dramatic flashback. From the leading character Rene Gallimard's words, the contradiction between present and past, narration and presentation, reality and imagination, uniqueness and regularity, all mix together. The story of Captain Pinkerton and Madame Butterfly in *Madame Butterfly* is intentionally measured against that of Rene Gallimard and Song Li-ling. At different levels of culture, politics, and philosophy, this complex, but interesting plot reflects a central theme: the relations between the East and West. This subject is challenging, animadverting the prejudice that the West has against the East.

Culturally, David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly*, unlike other Chinese-subject dramas, does not focus on an American-Chinese relationship, but on the relationship between the East and the West. He carefully designed the Chinese as the Oriental, contrasting with the West. There are several Chinese characters, such as a female impersonator (played by a male actor), from the Chinese Musical, an attendant, an officer, some musicians and a group of Red Guards. Those characters reflect two parts of life in China: politics and traditional drama during 1960s-70s. Presenting political issues then is central to the plot; as Du says, 'What intrigues David Henry Hwang is the cultural relation between the East and the West. He intentionally employs the dramatic effects of Chinese dramas/musicals to enhance the artistic atmosphere in this play'. (2002:9)

According to David Henry Hwang's view, the traditional relationship between the East and the West is like that between women and men. The West imposes this

concept on the East: that the Occident always thought the Orient was feminine, gentle and compliant. This prejudice repeatedly appears in Western literature. David Belasco's play and Giacomo Puccini's opera *Madame Butterfly* are typical examples employing this kind of unjust prejudice. According to Rene Gallimard, David Henry Hwang describes a story that shows the West governing the East. Benjamin Franklin Pinkerton, Captain in the American Navy, is basically a 'dead pigeon', who is

...not very good-looking, not too bright, and pretty much a wimp... he spent one hundred yen – in modern currency, equivalent to about sixty-six cents buying a Japanese geisha named Butterfly. (Hwang, 1988:10-17)

Pinkerton made a good deal because Butterfly is 'beautiful, laughing softly...for her man to do with as he pleases, even with her life itself...' (Hwang, 1988:10-17) But Pinkerton allowed his American wife to take Butterfly's child away, so Butterfly was extremely desperate and committed suicide at the end.

In *M. Butterfly*, when Gallimard saw Li-ling Song, at the party in the Embassy, perform the scene of Butterfly's suicide, he immediately fell in love with 'her.' After the performance, he told Song, 'Of her death. It's a ...a pure sacrifice. He's unworthy, but what can she do? She loves him...so much. It's a very beautiful story.' (Hwang, 1988:17) At that moment, Gallimard saw the image of 'Butterfly' in Song, who was a beautiful and compliant Oriental and would genuinely devote her life to the Western force. According to the author's view, this is the only way, employing Western concepts, to make Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* meaningful and stunning. However, the Oriental has a totally different point of

view towards this concept; therefore, Hwang made Li-ling Song unveil the real aspect:

Consider it this way: what would you say if a blonde homecoming queen fell in love with a short Japanese businessman? He treats her cruelly, then goes home for three years, during which time she prays to his picture and turns down marriage from a young Kennedy. Then, when she learns he has remarried, she kills herself. Now, I believe you would consider this girl to be a deranged idiot, correct? But because it's an Oriental who kills herself for a Westerner – ah! – you find it beautiful. (Hwang, 1988:18)

The playwright designs these characters in reverse and attempts intentionally to completely convert Butterfly's story. Gallimard clearly realised that Song dominated him, but he could not help indulging his imagination:

I have a vision. Of the Orient. That, deep within its almond eyes, there are still women. Women willing to sacrifice themselves for the love of a man. Even a man whose love is completely without worth...The love of a Butterfly can withstand many things – unfaithfulness, loss, even abandonment. But how can it face the one sin that implies all others? The devastating knowledge that, underneath it all, the object of her love was nothing more, nothing less than...a man...And I have found her at last. In a prison on the outskirts of Paris. My name is Rene Gallimard – also known as Madame Butterfly. (Hwang, 1988:92-93)

From the author's point of view, the concept that the Oriental is always compliant is rooted in the Imperialist's attitude in modern history. Through the character of Li-ling Song, he clarifies this aspect:

The West has sort of an international rape mentality towards the East...The West thinks of itself as masculine – big guns, big industry, big money – so the East is feminine – weak, delicate, poor...but good at art, and full of inscrutable wisdom – the feminine mystique...The West believes the East, deep down, *wants* to be dominated – because a woman can't think of herself. (Hwang, 1988:82-83)

Interestingly, the feelings expressed by Song above are confirmed with the exploration carried out previously in the first stage – the East is feminine and willing to submit to the West for protection. In other words, the East has to be represented by the West because they have no capacity to present themselves. This ideology occurs not only in the productions on Broadway but also in the programme of the Edinburgh International Festival in which the Chinese Musical *Life on a String* was presented by the Netherlands' Nieuw Ensemble in 1999.

At court in France, Song no longer wore the Butterfly outfit, but a lounge suit instead. After Song unveiled his real sex, Gallimard wore the Butterfly outfit. The final scene symbolizes a complete subversion in sex and gender. The whole dramatic effect connecting sex and gender with East and West is breathtaking and nail biting: the Orient is not always feminine and the West is not always male. No matter how strong the West is, and eager to dominate the East, the latter still gets a chance to hoodwink the former. Thus, the notion of 'male' West and 'feminine' East is no longer correct.

Through the exploration above, this research suggests that the message from *M. Butterfly* is an in-depth examination of the real identities of Orientals and Westerners. This thesis would argue that Westerners have had a long-standing prejudice against Asians; that is, they have equalled the concept of 'Asian' with feminine, weak, compliant, and artistic. This misconception in Western literature appears as a continuous stereotype and indeed, intensifies. When a concept has been intensified for a long time, it becomes reality, which will then prove this



stereotyped concept. Therefore, imagination creates reality, and the false reality intensifies the imagination.

According to this message, the conversion of Li-ling Song as an imagined Butterfly into Gallimard as a real Butterfly can be regarded as a philosophical allegory employed in clarifying the identities of the East and the West. Although David Henry Hwang does not redefine these two identities, unveiling the long-standing prejudice in the Western theatre and world has been his philosophical inclination and political duty. In short, in *M. Butterfly*, all agendas about culture, politics, sex / gender and philosophy are deeply concerned with the relation of the East and the West.

In the traditional Chinese way of performance, *M. Butterfly* contains not only theatrical skill, but some elements of the Chinese Musical. For example, Li-ling Song, who is the female impersonator with martial arts skills, not only sings some musical passages from a Chinese Musical, but also demonstrates martial arts with other Chinese actors. Under comments by Jamie H.J. Guan, the Chinese Musical consultant, those Chinese actors all wear more formal costumes than those for playing 'Chinese' repertory on Broadway. They show the excited American audience the vivid martial arts and fighting scenes, traditional entry movement, and beautiful performance. Chinese musicians appear on the stage in the scene presenting the Chinese Musical; but the original high register of Chinese percussion instruments is somewhat diminished.

Other than the external elements transplanted from the Chinese Musical, *M. Butterfly* essentially employs the manner of performance taken from Chinese drama. As Du suggests, like most Western theatre imitating Chinese or Japanese styles, stagehands are fully seen on the stage, which combines Chinese style with Japanese. The message from stagehands' entrances produce an alienation effect, as Bertolt Brecht said, and breaks the audience's illusion of the stage as well as brings in a new aspect of thinking analytically. Moreover, narration is a significant skill to develop a story. There are three ways to narrate the whole story here: Gallimard in the jail tells the audience his story, introduces characters with his narrative, and creates the imagination of the story with his narrative. The latter two are derived from the concept of Chinese drama. Gallimard introduces almost every new character's entry to the audience as if the monologue were in a Chinese Musical. Some of the characters start introducing themselves as soon as they get on the stage. This narrative performance is only used on a non-set, empty stage, derived from traditional Chinese and Japanese dramas.

In order to create an appropriate form to unfold his view, David Henry Hwang grabs and mixes both Eastern and Western traditions. He partly employs performance skills from Chinese dramas/musicals to strengthen this play and its major theme. David Henry Hwang intentionally and successfully combines Eastern content and form with Western. Thus, *M. Butterfly* becomes an epitome of the Chinese subject and performance in Broadway. In Edward Said's words:

The centuries-old designation of geographical space to the east of Europe as 'Oriental' was partly political, partly doctrinal, and partly imaginative; it implied no necessary connection between actual experience of the Orient and knowledge of what is Oriental. (978:210-211)

In *M. Butterfly*, Li-ling Song implies an opposite romance of an Oriental and a Westerner where a short Japanese businessman abandons a blonde, beautiful American girl, but she still prays to his picture and turns down marriage from a handsome Kennedy. In fact, this is a question that David Henry Hwang brought up about the social conditions then: whether or not American audiences will accept this kind of story. He means to subvert the false concept that had been formed in David Belasco's *Madame Butterfly* and which has continuously been intensified in the later theatre plays. He also means to convert the 'conventional' relationship between the East and the West.

This sensible change makes audience and critics cogitate. Initially, when those critics extolled David Henry Hwang and his *M. Butterfly*, however, they avoided discussing and facing the political problem presented by the relationship between Gallimard and Li-ling Song. Some of them even criticised that this play was anti-American, and thought it was a diatribe against forming traditional East-West relations. In David Henry Hwang's view of *M. Butterfly*:

I consider it a plea to all sides to cut through our respective layers of cultural and sexual misperception, to deal with one another truthfully for our mutual good, from the common and equal ground we share as human beings. (Hwang, 1988:100)

Accordingly, *M. Butterfly*'s success on Broadway not only means the subject about East and West is always attractive to American audiences, but also

presents an honest and real theatrical style that allows an equal conversation between East and West. Therefore, *M. Butterfly* represents a new perception in American drama, to observe the East and West equally and objectively. The voice from the new generation of Sino-Americans is just a start for this thesis to explore another opinion towards Western Interculturalism. The following section will examine more of how other arguments were expressed from an Eastern point of view and how festival reviews of the productions of Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeths* are corroborated by another viewpoint.

### **3.3 EIF Criticisms Towards the Productions of Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth***

Following the example of *M. Butterfly*, the reality of Orientalism within Western intercultural theatre practice has continued to arouse scholars and artists who, from Eastern cultural backgrounds, have given voice to, and even tried to reconstruct, the unequal position between the West and East. For example, Rustom Bharucha reaffirmed his suspicion that intercultural projects still have the whiff of colonialism about them, that they prevent the possibility of any reciprocity in intercultural exchange. As he stated in *Theatre and the World – Performance and the Politics of Culture* (1990):

...as much as one would like to accept the seeming openness of Euro-American Interculturalists to other cultures, the large economic and political domination of the West has clearly constrained, if not negated, the possibilities of genuine exchange. (p.2)

In response to the argument of the shortage of fair exchange between East and West, in 1986, Frank Dunlop created the World Theatre Season, which was recognised as one of the greatest moves in the history of the Edinburgh International Festival since 1947.

Through the EIF, more and more Chinese and Japanese theatre productions were introduced to Edinburgh's audiences, especially during Dunlop's directorship. For instance, between 1985 and 1991, the Japanese director Yukio Ninagawa presented five of his works in a short span of seven years. Also, under the auspices of EIF, the Shanghai Kunju Theatre made its first-ever European tour.

According to an online chronological listing of Yukio Ninagawa's works,<sup>54</sup> Ninagawa made his first appearance at the EIF as a director of *Macbeth* in 1985. Although he was already renowned on the Continent by then and had toured with *Medea* in Europe in 1983 and 1984, this was his first appearance in Britain. After 1985, however, he became a regular at the EIF during Dunlop's administration.

As Allan Massie stated, from the viewpoint of both John Drummond and Frank Dunlop, the arts should speak an international language which breaks down barriers of misunderstanding and blind ignorance.<sup>55</sup> Whether or not Dunlop's major achievement of World Theatre Season really breaks down the barrier of

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<sup>54</sup> Yukio Ninagawa Homepage (2004): <http://www.my-pro.co.jp/ninagawa/work.html>

<sup>55</sup> Massie, 1983:8

misunderstanding and/or misrepresentation towards Ninagawa's and Shanghai's *Macbeths*, there is a need to explore whether the concept of Orientalism and Western Interculturalism is apparent in Festival critics' writings. The reviews in this subsection are mainly from the festival critics; however, an analysis of reviews on both festival and London will be carried out in Chapter 5.

Undoubtedly, Ninagawa's productions were immensely well received in Edinburgh. As Mary Brennan wrote in the *Glasgow Herald* (23 August 1985):

There have been *Macbeths*, more than I care to remember, where the words have been Shakespeare's English but their sense and power have been made foreign to the audience. In the Japanese production, mounted by the Toho Company, only the odd, familiar name comes clear of the speech but oh, the essence and taste of the drama shine forth unimpeded...Vocally, it is like a thrilling modern opera (indeed there is a striking incidental use of classical music, including Faure's Requiem)...Visually it is magnificent, a brilliant translation of text into stunning, universally accessible images...Superbly costumed, resoundingly well acted – the facial and vocal expressions are so transparently communicative I could almost hear the English through them – this Japanese *Macbeth* offers revelations that transcend language. (p.30)

*The Times* also called the annual appearances of the Ninagawa Company 'vivid highlights.'<sup>56</sup> *The Guardian* notes, 'Ninagawa's *Macbeth* brought the audience to its feet and reminded us that there are exciting alternatives to the British way of doing Shakespeare.'<sup>57</sup> After performing at the EIF, in 1987 Ninagawa's *Macbeth* and *Medea* were subsequently invited to the National Theatre's International Season in London.

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<sup>56</sup> *The Times*, cited from 1991 EIF official programme

<sup>57</sup> *The Guardian*, cited in *Festival '88*, James Grassie (ed.), Edinburgh: Pastime Publication, 1988, p. 21

However, Edinburgh's reception of Chinese Kunju was lukewarm in comparison to that given to Ninagawa. Apart from acrobatic skills and costumes, critics in Edinburgh and London alike panned the performance of this four-hundred-year-old Chinese traditional art form. This seems ironic especially when UNESCO officially acknowledged Kunju as one of the world's 'Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity' in March 2001.<sup>58</sup>

As Alex Renton, *The Independent* reviewer, wrote with reference to *Macbeth* by Shanghai Kunju Theatre (28 August 1987), the performances' 'rich, elusive myths... full of Confucian inconsequentialities, are more in keeping with the vigorous symbolising of the Kunju style than are Shakespeare's subtleties.' (p.11) He also criticises the *Macbeth* adapted and directed by Shi-feng Zheng, who added a parrot as Lady Macbeth's confidant besides creating a sister for her.

Milton Shulman, critic of the *London Evening Standard*, agreed with Renton. After seeing *The Woman Warrior*, Shulman commented,

As a spectacle, the show is disappointing, since usually there are only two actors on the stage, and only when a battle turns up is there a suggestion of massed whirling frenzy such as one might get at a military tattoo. (27 October 1987)

*Glasgow Herald's* theatre critic, Robert Dawson Scott wrote about the *Macbeth* produced by Shanghai Kunju Theatre:

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<sup>58</sup> UNESCO, [http://www.unesco.org/bpi/intangible\\_heritage/](http://www.unesco.org/bpi/intangible_heritage/), 18 May 2001

What's important to a Western audience in *Macbeth* – ambition over-reaching itself, the heroic figure brought low – isn't there, and the vocabulary of character and motive is so alien it's hard to follow... Add to that a playing style which seems more concerned to display the richly embroidered costumes than anything else, and confusion is total. (26 Aug 1987, p.4)

In fact, the relationship between critics and theatre productions, as well as Festival programming strategy, is always controversial. Therefore, there is a need to discuss briefly the opinions from critics' viewpoints. Scot-nits (Scottish Web Theatre Forum) used to hold a debate about the role critics are playing. Theatre critic, Mark Fisher states, 'What's interesting is not "whether" the show was good or bad, but "how" it was good or bad (and, indeed, the many ways in which it was good "and" bad). As soon as you make that distinction, your field of vision changes. Now the broader context is relevant...' <sup>59</sup> Another theatre reviewer, Peter Lathan also argues,

A review is only one person's opinion of a show as (s)he saw it at one particular performance. We all know that people have off-days for all sorts of perfectly valid reasons and no matter how much our professionalism may work overtime to make up for feeling "off," we cannot always give the perfect performance - or write the perfect review!<sup>60</sup>

Steve Cramer, the reviewer of *The List* expresses his feeling about critics when he says, 'Kenneth Tynan once said "a critic is someone who knows the way but cannot drive the car." I agree.

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<sup>59</sup> Scottish Web Theatre Forum, 5 December 2004

<sup>60</sup> Scottish Web Theatre Forum, 6 December 2004



Judith Christ, who is a critic in New York, once said "A review is the only independent source of information. Everything else is advertising."<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the renowned British theatre critic, Michael Billington says, 'The critic's prime responsibility is to his or her conscience and vision of the truth... A play is a public event that it costs money to attend - hence the need for external assessment.' (Billington, 2000) How does this external assessment interact with artists' belief and artistic truth? According to Ninagawa's experience, when he first did *Macbeth* in 1980, it was not really well received. Ninagawa thought that *Macbeth* in *butsudan* (altar) was a masterpiece, but the Japanese critics did not like it and there were not many people in the auditorium. Therefore he was quite disappointed that people still did not understand him. For Ninagawa, theatre is in between the performers who are delivering and the receiving audience, who are paying for the tickets. As the result of this thought, Ninagawa emphasises that critics do nothing to the theatre and that they therefore do not have the right to make a judgement.

From the performing arts impresario perspective, when Thelma Holt, Ninagawa's British producer, was interviewed by Nozomi Abe, she tried to answer whether the critics in Britain really had the knowledge of oriental theatre. Holt claimed:

I mean a critic is either knowledgeable therefore has a right to comment to come see and inform plays. If he does not come to inform plays, if he is a professional critic, you should go and find out. So the answer to that

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<sup>61</sup> Scottish Web Theatre Forum, 7 December 2004

question is that some of them do and some of them do not. The ones who do not should not be writing. So we do not really have to take notice of what they are saying.<sup>62</sup>

Undoubtedly, the theatre critics and artists are a symbiont in which critics need the place to practice their knowledge/prejudice. No matter how artists hate reviewers, and what the difference is between the reality of production quality and the writing of reviews, most artists also need the approval from the reviewers for their artistic as well as financial improvement and success. Return to the reviews of both Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth*; apart from those comments on the productions themselves, there were some observations which focused on the symbols of Japanese and Chinese cultural traditions in both works. While Western theatre was ruled by Naturalism and Realism for over two centuries, forms of traditional Oriental art put more emphasis on an inner essence. Their art is based on the metaphysical and abstract. Moreover, Chinese Kunju is also regarded as abstract art – it is full of characters whose nature is explained by subtle movements.

These Japanese and Chinese cultural characters were noted in most Festival reviews. For example, Peter Whitebrook described Ninagawa's *Macbeth* in *The Scotsman* (23 August 1985):

For the production is intensely religious, partly symbolised by the intermittent showers of white cherry blossom petals...Throughout this production, each movement decisive. The classical, stylised control and sheer theatrical presence of these actors is breath-taking. (p.6)

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<sup>62</sup> Nozomi Abe, Interview with Thelma Holt, Edinburgh, 27 October, 2004, see Appendix 6.1.

Besides, Michael Coveney recalled the same production in the *Financial Times* (27 August 1985):

It was beautifully composed on a Buddhist altar beneath a forest of cherry blossom, acted with incomparable power and rhythm, brimming with naked ambition, vengeance and superstition...The costumes and wigs all stunning, are of traditional Japanese theatrical stock and the play is given complete and in right order... Even the 'English' scene is for once exciting. Mikijiro Hira's [ as Macbeth ] unforgettable heroic warrior strides terrifyingly to his doom with the swishing Samurai authority, blood-curdling glottal explosions and murderous inhalations of the great Oriental performer. (p.11)

Furthermore, Stewart Conn also expressed in *The Listener* (29 August 1985):

The Toho Company's absorption of Macbeth into Kabuki ritual is spellbinding. Set in sixteenth century Japan it casts a searing light on the play's psychology...Komaki Kurichara [ as Lady Macbeth ] , initially exuding a doll-like sexuality, disintegrates tremulously and graphically. (p.34)

Since visual imagery has become synonymous with Yukio Ninagawa, most reviews mentioned this distinctive feature. For example, Peter Whitebrook commented, 'The strength of the production, stunningly evoked in Ninagawa's virtuoso stage images, is the association of beauty and danger, and its religious dimension.' (*The Scotsman*, 23 August 1985, p.6) Stewart Conn even went further that 'Their visual beauty and dark-bordered spaciousness, and the use of music (Fauré, taking a little getting used to), contribute to a filmic quality nowhere more telling than in the undulation of cherry-boughs...' (*The Listener*, 29 August 1985, p.34)

Catherine Lockerbie expressed her opinion on *Kunju Macbeth* in the *Scotsman* (26 August 1987) that 'those who come looking for some sort of Kung Fu frenzy

will have come to the wrong place.' (p.7) Moreover, another review was filed by Fernau Hall at *The Daily Telegraph*:

...and European spectators have no trouble in understanding the Chinese conventions (such as the use of a whip to indicate that a horse is being ridden). Elizabethan actors made great use of stylised gestures, and it is likely that Shakespeare would have found much that was comprehensible in this production. (p.8)

In addition, since music played a major role in both *Macbeths*, how did the critics respond to it? Michael Ratcliffe described in the *Observer* that in Ninagawa's *Macbeth*:

Western, sometimes specifically Christian music is used. Mahler, Schubert, Corelli and Bach made an effect of heart-breaking pathos against the dark and glittering splendour on stage, and supply a tragic drive which might otherwise not have been there. (25 August 1985, p.18)

Michael Coveney of the *Financial Times* also echoed Ratcliffe's suggestion that 'The sound track chiefly comprised an ethereal, throbbing mixture of the "Sanctus" from Faure's *Requiem* and Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*.' (27 August 1985, p.32) However, Kunju's music seemed unappreciated by the critics, as Allen Wright wrote in the *Scotsman*: 'If neither the singing nor the musical accompaniment (from a large and loud band) is harmonious to Western ears, it is full of symbolism as well as the sound of clashing cymbals.' (27 August 1987, p.9)

The most interesting feedback was given by Clive Barker in his *The Possibilities and Politics of Intercultural Penetration* (1991) as reported in Pavis' *The Intercultural Performance Reader*. As Barker watched the performance by the

Shanghai Opera Company (Shanghai Kunju Theatre), one man sitting behind him said, 'You won't see a better show than this outside Las Vegas.' (Pavis, 1996:249-250)

Ironically, before Ninagawa's *Macbeth* was presented in Edinburgh, festival critics didn't seem very interested in his works. According to the information proved by the *London Theatre Record*, there were six reviews in Edinburgh in 1985 and nine reviews on the rerun of the same production in London in 1987. By contrast, Shanghai Kunju Theatre's productions encountered an entirely different situation. Eight reviews have been found in Edinburgh and only two have been found in London. Consequently, this reality might be perceived as confirming the critics' opinions that the attractive productions will come to London after the Festival.

All in all, this section has attempted to show how critics reacted to both Japanese and Chinese intercultural theatre productions. The following chapter will explore how Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju assimilated and utilized Euro-American culture and created their own intercultural *Macbeth*.

#### **Chapter 4: Ninagawa Company's and Shanghai Kunju Theatre's Productions of *Macbeth***

The discussion of intercultural theatre practice has been divided into three stages in this thesis: First stage: the exploration of Chinese-themed productions by Western artists. Second stage: the examination of *M Butterfly* by Sino-American David Henry Hwang, and the Third stage, in which two productions of *Macbeth* (by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre) are investigated from a purely Asian perspective as two intercultural examples.

While the notion and theory of Interculturalism has been created by Western scholars and artists, most of the arguments against Interculturalism are from former colonies or the so-called Third World. Apparently, the intercultural practices of the East have not been explored very much by Western mainstream academics. One of the leading voices from South Asia to criticise this unequal situation, Rustom Bharucha, gave his opinion in *Theatre and the World*: that Interculturalism should be perceived as a 'two-way street' providing mutual reciprocity of needs. However, the reality of this 'two-way street' is more like a 'one-way street', which has been dominated by Western discourse.

I think it should be acknowledged that the implications of interculturalism are very different for people in impoverished, 'developing' countries like India, and for their counterparts in technologically advanced, capitalist societies like America, where interculturalism has been more strongly promoted both as a philosophy and a business. (Bharucha, 1990: 1)

Bharucha's argument was supported by the evidence of Leonard C. Pronko, who introduced the art of Kabuki to the West. He told of his experience in *Theatre East/West: Return to the Feast* (1994) when he was struggling to preserve the authenticity of the Kabuki form. Ironically, he then realised that through such dedication to authenticity he risked losing his audience. In his words, 'As our productions became more authentic, I wondered whether they became less accessible to the American audience.' (p.17) This consideration by Pronko echoes the main question of this research: whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted without distortion in any aspect. Pronko was one of the first to produce Kabuki in the USA; however, western theorists and practitioners have been acquainted with both Noh and Kabuki since the nineteenth century.

Moreover, this resistance to authenticity was not specifically American, but should be expanded to include European audiences. As Jacques Nichet states, foreign classics are particularly attractive to him: 'they maintain a strangeness, a naïveté for a Frenchman like myself and allow me to utilize free forms' (1990: 167). Many directors enjoy working on texts foreign to them, since they do not then feel themselves bound by a scholarly or pontificating tradition.

Nevertheless, traditions and features of cultural identity are smoothed out in the process of assimilation of the works of some non-Western groups. As Clive Barker observed, it has been fascinating in the last decade to watch black theatre groups, who have the most to lose by assimilation, withdraw from public

performance. Moreover, South Asian theatre groups, who have also come from a most unknown sector, extend their work by broadening its range, even to the extent of appropriating European classics.

Therefore, this chapter puts its emphasis on the issue of whether or not the original cultural and artistic identity is changed within the intercultural practice of the Ninagawa Company and Shanghai Kunju Theatre by bringing their productions to Edinburgh. In order to further the analysis, the first subsection of this chapter will examine the complicity between Japan and China's social and cultural contexts, the influence of the West, and its impact on the issue of cultural/ artistic identity. *Macbeth* is one of the best-known works of Shakespeare and this European classic was appropriated by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre as examples of intercultural practice. Consequently, in the second and third subsection of this chapter, both Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth* will be explored from the viewpoint of their performance texts.

#### **4.1 Social and Cultural Context and Identity**

We are living in a world where many political boundaries have been revealed as arbitrary, or as no longer coinciding with the cultural consciousness and aspirations of the people contained within those boundaries. Moreover, there has also been a period of increased migration so that political boundaries no



longer contain one people or culture, but many. In this situation, as Clive Barker expressed it, 'these two processes have led to the establishing of new boundaries, internal and external, as people try to hold on to or assert their cultural identity and traditions.' (1991:255)

However, some scholars such as Ping-hui Liao (廖炳惠), Professor of Foreign Languages and Literature at Tsing Hua University, Taiwan, disagree that the theory of Orientalism resulting from Post-colonialism is applicable to the countries that were never colonised by foreign powers. In Liao's opinion in his *Modernity in Re-vision: Reading Postmodern/Postcolonial Theories* (回顧現代 – 後現代與後殖民主義論文集) (1994), the discourse on post-colonialism was developed through real historical experience, which is not applicable to countries other than former colonies.

Jing-yuan Zhang (張京媛), the Associate Professor of Chinese, East Asian Languages & Culture at Georgetown University, USA, argues against Liao's idea. Zhang claims in her *Postcolonial Criticism and Cultural Identity* (後殖民論述與文化認同) (1995) that some people might think that in the first half of the twentieth century, China was situated between quasi-feudalism and quasi-colonisation. Yet, if they just concentrate on this fact and believe that there is no underlying relevance of Post-colonialism to China, then they might disregard the major impact that Orientalism has had on Chinese daily life.

Jing-yuan Zhang's theory has been the basis of this thesis. In spite of cultural imperialism occurring predominately in Third World countries, it can and does still occur in First World countries, such as France. According to *The Economist*, the all-time top box office film in French film history was a Hollywood movie – *Titanic*. Furthermore, in 2004, the most searched-for subject on Google France was Britney Spears.<sup>63</sup> Rustom Bharucha used the word 'invasion' to describe this cultural imperialism by the weapon that is the Western media. As he explained in Patrice Pavis' *The Intercultural Performance Reader*:

The implications of this cultural invasion are enormous, not merely because of the grotesque disparity between the consumerist representation of 'development' on television (what is desirable) as opposed to the abject economic conditions of its viewers (which determine what is available). At a less obvious level, this invasion of images - more often than not, context-less but not value-free - is of critical significance because, for the first time in our cultural history, we are seeing the homogenisation of Western cultures into a very consolidated and alluring image of the Other - a liberal, capitalist, sexually enticing market of a world - in relation to which we can now see and compare ourselves in the so-called 'third world' with greater deference than ever before. (Pavis, 1996:205)

The European influence on Japan and China was probably subtler than the political dominance of the British, Dutch or French present in Africa and some Asian countries. However, the Allied Powers occupied Japan for almost seven years after World War II, and the Western theatrical influence started even earlier. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Japanese intellectuals were educated abroad and brought back with them a taste for Western dramaturgy, such as Shakespeare, Shaw, Strindberg and Chekhov.

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<sup>63</sup> *The Economist*, December 24<sup>th</sup> 2005 – January 6<sup>th</sup> 2006, pp.49-51

Also, China had ceded some of her territories to foreign forces such as Germany and Britain during the late phase of the Qing Dynasty. Accordingly, this thesis would argue that the Western influence in terms of cultural, economic and political domination was strong in these two realms. For instance, representations of Western culture, such as lifestyle and food/drink preference (coffee culture, junk food, etc) - both of which infiltrated the European market from the USA - has been introduced to Japan and China through the powerful media, which are mostly dominated by Western multinational corporations. This Western culture has created a vision of a global lifestyle. Besides, we cannot really separate the connection between domestic events and countries in the rest of the world especially when these domestic events might damage the interests of the so-called global justice.

In addition, with regards to theatre culture, in the Japanese theatre tradition, the early Shingeki period is a perfect example of Western influence preventing the rise of modern indigenous drama. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, plays by Japanese authors were rarely staged, and many, such as Hogetsu Shimamura and Kaoru Osanai (artistic directors of Jiyu Gekijo), believed that theatre should exclusively stage Western plays in translation (e.g. Shakespeare, Chekhov, Gorki, Hauptmann and Ibsen) as those written by Japanese authors were thought inadequate.

Similarly, in the twentieth century, waves of Western culture and theatre rose rapidly and inundated China. There were two climaxes in the history of Chinese

theatre: one took place in the May Fourth (New Culture) Movement on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1919 and carried on for twenty years, and another took place in the 1980s after China opened its domestic market to the world. Dr. Shen Ma (馬森) said that these two climaxes created the turning point in the process of 'Westernisation' in the history of modern Chinese theatre. Thus, the effect of cultural diffusion was growing in the modernizing process of Chinese theatre.

In fact, the history of Chinese theatre (also known as 'Chinese Musical' or 'Chinese Opera') is tremendously long and has caused cultural conflicts and evolution ever since the dispute between 'ancient form' and 'contemporary form' started in the ancient Pre-Chin Period.<sup>64</sup> During the two thousand years after the Pre-Chin Period, several changes took place in Chinese theatre. However, the changes that took place in the twentieth century are entirely different from others in history.

Examining the changes from Nanxi (南戲) in the Sung and Yuan Dynasties to Quanqi (傳奇) in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, or from Kunju to Peking Opera, although the change was significant, it was within the circle of tradition; the form only changed within the circle of the fundamental aesthetics of Chinese theatre, and the traditional theatrical ideas and artistic values were not changed at all. Even if there is an all-dialogue section (with no singing) in the passage *Indictment* (寫狀) of *Kunju JiaoSho Ji* (蛟綃記), it is still authentic and standard

traditional musical theatre that aims to present its abstract performing aesthetics.

In the early twentieth century, Chinese theatre finally broke through the circle of traditional aesthetics, which it had followed for thousands years, to the modern play. This brand-new performing art from the Western world started developing with the wave of Westernisation, and Chinese artists and culture observers began to open their eyes and minds to support and search for a new culture. Thus, the traditional theatrical idea and artistic values rapidly changed, the classical period in the history of Chinese theatre ended and the process of modernizing began. Meanwhile, the language construction of plays changed hugely – purely musical form was replaced by a dualistic construction of Western theatre and Chinese Opera.

However, throughout the modernizing process of Chinese theatre in the twentieth century, there were some blind spots of acknowledgement and value judgements in dealing with the China-West problem. In the process, for example, Westernising equalled modernizing, and nationalizing equalled reviving ancient art. Due to these blind spots, the call of modernization somehow connotes colonialism, which usually makes the discussion and advocacy of nationalization mix with anti-modernization emotions and words.

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<sup>64</sup>(BC 2000~BC 221) Pre-Chin Period is a significant period in Chinese history, in which Chinese civilization evolved from a primitive society into a civilized society.

All in all, the shift of theatre culture created by the Western influence on Japan and China is just part of the result of European-American cultural importation. This importation also created a huge cultural shock in other realms. The term 'culture shock' was initially introduced in 1958. According to Carmen Guanipa in *Culture Shock* (1998), it means 'the anxiety produced when a person moves to a completely new environment.'<sup>65</sup> This term also expresses the loss of a certain value, the feeling of being uncertain what to do, to think, or to say, how to deal with things in a new environment, and being confused about what is appropriate or inappropriate. Traditionally, this is thought to be a completely negative experience as facing another culture; it is, as Stephan Dahl stated in *Cultural Diversity, Globalization and Cultural Convergence in Communications and Culture Transformation* (2001), 'anything that has a potential to start shifting variables in the culture system of either the individual or the society as a whole.'<sup>66</sup>

Moreover, in Adler's description:

Culture shock is thought of as a profound learning experience that leads to a high degree of self-awareness and personal growth. Rather than being only a disease for which adaptation is the cure, culture shock is likewise at the very heart of the cross-cultural learning experience. It is an experience in self-understanding and change. (1987:29)

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<sup>65</sup> <http://edweb.sdsu.edu/people/CGuanipa/cultshok.htm>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.stephweb.com/capstone/capstone.pdf>

Culture shock can be evoked by facing any other different culture, or by 'being exposed to fundamentally different cultural forms on the home ground.'<sup>67</sup> Where the encounter takes place and how different the cultures are will have a strong and deep influence on the extent of such shock.

According to research that has centred on the occurrence of culture shock: 'following this line of inquiry, there are a multitude of possible shocks, such as the role shock, language shock or cultural fatigue when individuals are exposed to a "foreign" culture. Some studies suggest a positive correlation between culture shock and the occurrence of mental illnesses resulting from the stress experienced.' (Kinzie, Tran et al, 1980; Williams & Westermeyer, 1986)<sup>68</sup> What is experienced as 'culture shock may have a positive influence on social and professional effectiveness' – as found in other research. (Ruben & Kealey, 1979)<sup>69</sup>

Regarding the culture shock that occurred both in Japan and China, the Japanese and Chinese were terrified by the demon-like foreigners with red or fair hair and blue or green eyes when they encountered Western people in the second half of the nineteenth century. They were yet more shocked by novel Western devices and by Western dress as well as other cultural aspects.

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<sup>67</sup> <http://www.stephweb.com/capstone/capstone.pdf>.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.stephweb.com/capstone/capstone.pdf>.

For Chinese theatre art, the importation of Western theatre was received by theatre participants in China as a culture shock in the late nineteenth century. The new-styled Peking Opera, with modern costumes in Shanghai, was widely known and even influenced other performing arts, such as the New Play. This so-called New Play and other sorts of original plays were also called the Modern Play. In the early twentieth century, students first formed some Modern Play groups. Afterwards, other groups for theatre evolution were formed. For instance, in September 1907, Zhong-sheng Wang (王鐘聲), who had studied in Japan (Japanese theatre had already been influenced by Western theatre culture at that time), founded Chun-Yang Institution (春陽社) in Shanghai. According to Wang's idea, revolution is the only way to strengthen China; there are two ways to revolutionize people: running newspapers and theatre evolution.

Initially, the Modern Play's artistic form was not stable. It truly originated from foreign cultures, emphasized realism, utilized new sets, and adopted the elements of realistic life. Those new artists and inventors resided in China, so they were also deeply influenced by traditional Chinese theatre, and took examples from it. Therefore, it was inevitable at the beginning that they adopted the singing style and performing methods of Peking Opera when performing realistic plays. Ban-mei Hsu (徐半梅), a playwright of the Modern Play, says in his *Recollection*, 'The theatre itself is just the "modern play with modern costume" and copying the styles off those of Peking Opera.' (Gao, Lee, 1999:24-25) Ironically, the Modern Play, after it was fully developed, did influence Peking



Opera and other theatre forms in repertoires, performing styles, theatre ideas, and talent exchanges.

Even nowadays, when the world has gradually become globalised, culture shock is still a common phenomenon within cross-cultural activities. According to *Xinhua Net News* (新華網)<sup>70</sup>, in the example of Western-style musical productions in China, there were two major productions created by native companies: *The Torch of Paris* (巴黎的火炬) in 1990 and *The Spirit of Midnight Song* (夜半歌魂) in 1996. In the opinion of the deputy chief of the Shanghai Opera House, Song Wei (魏松), the first production failed because the production only imitated the concept of the Western musical without its artistic content. The second one was trying to duplicate Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*; however, even though it cost around £355,000<sup>71</sup>, it still was not well received. Therefore, when Chinese audiences first met real Western musical productions, the culture shock was enormous.

The British musical *Les Misérables* toured Shanghai between 22 June and 7 July 2002. Although this production was supposed to be banned by the Chinese authorities, as it might awaken the memory of the Tiananmen Square protests and the suppression of 1989, this world-renowned production was still presented to a Chinese audience. After the opening, Song Wei expressed his shock that,

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<sup>70</sup> [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2002-07/08/content\\_473998.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2002-07/08/content_473998.htm) (2002-07-08)

<sup>71</sup> Based on a professor's salary, this amount of money in China is almost equivalent to approx £3Million in the UK.

because of *Les Misérables*, the Chinese people finally realised what a so-called musical was, and what a truly brilliant musical production is. Song Wei believed that this production showed that the shortages in China were not only in tangible elements such as budgets and theatre techniques but also in the artistic aspects of the script, music and designers.

These two examples confirm Ruben & Kealey's concepts in the work of Stephan Dahl's *Cultural Diversity, Globalization and Cultural Convergence in Communications and Culture Transformation* (2001), that 'culture shock may have a positive influence on social and professional effectiveness.'<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, under globalization, theatre became one of the most influential gateways to introduce native cultures to others. Theatre artists have to face the audience's keen expectations as well as strict censorship, which might cause changes and/or damage to their own culture identity.

For example, the Senegal Dance Company was invited to perform in Taiwan in 1985. Normally, the female dancers in this African dance troupe performed without covering their busts, so as to present the relationship to nature. However, under pressure from the government, they were asked to wear a top. Eighteen years later, some events from the Brazilian Carnival were staged in Taiwan in 2003. In order to represent its nature of freedom and relaxation, the authority in Taiwan accepted the original version of Samba with nakedness in

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<sup>72</sup><http://www.stephweb.com/capstone/capstone.pdf>

principle. The only condition was that no-one under the age of eighteen could attend the performances.

This negative attitude towards a different culture by the Taiwanese authorities was also reflected in the reviews of Kunju *Macbeth* as mentioned in the last chapter. One reviewer from the *Glasgow Herald* described Kunju *Macbeth* as this thesis mentioned before 'What's important to a Western audience in *Macbeth* – ambition over-reaching itself, the heroic figure brought low –isn't there, and the vocabulary of character and motive is so alien it's hard to follow...' <sup>73</sup>

Sometimes culture shock was met with a positive attitude, as in the Japanese and Chinese instances, and sometimes with conditional acceptance as in the case of the Taiwanese. However, the latter is, this thesis would argue, a sort of cultural isolationism closing intercourse between cultures in order to protect the people from cultural shock. In addition, it was necessary to explore the realities of Japanese theatre and Chinese Kunju and for those artists to deal with Western culture shock in their own right a hundred years ago. Furthermore, discussion is necessary as to whether or not the realities of cultural shock have affected the artistic identities of the *Macbeth* productions created by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre.

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<sup>73</sup> Scott, 26 Aug 1987, p.4

In order to define the reality of identification within the intercultural theatre works of *Macbeth* by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre, the issue of identity and its complicity with Interculturalism should first be explored. As intercultural works have always involved hybridization, Patrice Pavis raised a question in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996), when confronted with the reality of hybridization within intercultural practice, can cultural identity still be an issue for people to discuss? Pavis acknowledges the fact that the emphasis on identity is mainly by the intellectuals and artists from the Third World. Those who try to use identity as a tool not only preserve their own roots, but also resist the ideology of Universalism from the First World.

Although Pavis offered an alternative view to the conflict of identity issues between the Third and First World, this substitute seems to have disregarded the significance of identity to the people whose inheritance has been appropriated without being acknowledged. According to Pavis' suggestion, there is no longer monocultural theatre or multicultural/intercultural theatre. It should lie between a conception of culture as supporter or bastion of a cultural identity, and a conception of culture as heterogeneity and collage. Pavis explained the cultural identity of the former type can only be employed in societies which are isolated and have developed without any invasion by majority cultures. In reality, he thought, this situation is rare.

In contrast, Pavis insisted that standardised Western culture is everywhere, and it reduces all ethnic and geographic differences to a one-world culture, making a

'computerized global village culture with neither subtext nor nuance, a culture which defines itself in terms of multiplicity and citation rather than unity and identity.' (1996:13) In this case, Pavis offered us Disneyland culture as an example to demonstrate this standardized Western culture. Within the Disneyland culture, every product is completely standardised, easily accessible and consumable by the majority. Compared with this, decentred and multiple culture is, as Pavis said, 'a quest for identity, now considered too naive, in favour of a self-assertion as cynically functionalist and postmodern.'<sup>74</sup>

Pavis' concept of the subject of identity is confirmed by the West's established ideology of Universalism. This argument was supported by Rustom Bharucha when he criticised Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* in *Theatre and the World – Performance and the Politics of Culture* (1990), saying that it upholds a Eurocentric structure of action and performance that has been specifically designed for the international market. Judith Butler, a well known theorist of power, gender, sexuality and identity, makes a powerful case in *Bodies That Matter* that all identities operate through exclusion, through the discursive construction of a constitutive outside and the production of objected and marginalized subjects, apparently outside the field of the symbolic, the representable – the production of an 'outside', a domain of intelligible effects<sup>75</sup> – which then returns to trouble and unsettle the foreclosures which we prematurely call 'identities'. While the identity issue within the phenomenon of

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<sup>74</sup> Pavis, 1996:13-14

Interculturalism has been a contrasting and contradictory debate between West and East, how has identity specifically emerged?

As a Chinese scholar, Fan Meng, once said in *Postmodern Identity Politics*, 'identity' is a complex notion in the Chinese language. In fact, the idea of 'identity' is embodied, for the Chinese, in many meanings, such as those of identification, sense of belonging, even one's physical features and characteristics. In the West, Stuart Hall (1996) uses the term 'identity' to refer to a meeting point. The term refers, on one hand, to discourses and practices that attempt to 'interpolate' – to speak to us or put us into place as social subjects of particular discourses. On the other hand, it points to processes producing subjectivities and constructing us as subjects, of which things can be spoken. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions that discursive practices construct for us. As a certain concept, he defines that identity operates 'under erasure' in the 'interval between reversal and emergence.' (Hall, 1996:2)

Thus, in Hall's idea, the term 'identity,' arising exactly at the point of intersection in between 'the rudimentary levels of psychic identity and drives and at the level of discursive formation and practices which constitute the social field.' (Hall, 1996:20) For Lacan, identity is not just something that always presents in a subject, but comes into being 'from the place of the Other.' (Redman, 2000:11) In psychoanalytic usage, it inherits a rich legacy of semantics. Freud says that it

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<sup>75</sup> Butler, 1993:22

is 'the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person.' (Freud, 1921/1991) (Hall, 1996:3)

In addition, with the same thought as Bulter, Edward Said also suggests:

The construction of identity – for identity, whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, *is* finally a construction – involves establishing opposites and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from “us.” (Said, 1978:332)

As a contest involving individuals and institutions in societies, identity of self/other is a re-interpretation over processes of history, society, intellect, and politics, and it is far from static; in other words, no matter what age or political status it is, each individual can re-create its Others.

Presented as the source of effective meanings, from Heath's point of view, individuals are constituted as subjects by means of the discursive formation, a process of subjection in which the individual is identified as a subject in a structure of misrecognition. Echoing Heath's notion, this thesis would suggest that human identity is not natural, but is even very unstable, constructed, and sometimes invented completely.

Hall maintains that we have to understand identities, through clear strategies, as produced in certain historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices because they are constructed interiorly, not exteriorly. They also emerge within the specific modalities of power, so they are more

interpreted as the product of different and exclusive marking than as the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity, which is a sort of full similarity with no internal distinction, and, traditionally, an identity.<sup>76</sup>

All in all, this thesis would suggest that identities are constructed through interior difference, that 'it is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks. Through this recognition, the only reason identities can function as a point of identification and attachment is that they allow themselves to exclude, to leave out, to render outside or objected. Each identity owns its margin and excess.

Based on those definitions mentioned above, the identification for Japanese and Chinese cultures shifted throughout history and became unique within their own social and cultural contexts. Consequently, how were their cultural identities constructed? During the 1980s there were vast upheavals around the world in terms of political liberalisation, economic development, and cultural exchange and representation. Large numbers of theatrical productions ventured out of their homelands and across the seas, gathering high praise as they went, at international festivals in cities as diverse as Edinburgh, Athens and Los Angeles.

Clive Barker described in *The Possibilities and Politics of Intercultural Penetration and Exchange* (1991)

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<sup>76</sup> Hall, 1996:4



The role and growth of festivals, spreading from the large-scale ones set up after the Second World War to help repair the schisms and wounds caused by that war, has also made a major contribution to the accessibility of foreign work and established possibilities for intercultural penetration and exchange. Through the meetings which festivals allow, the exchange of ideas is possible. (Pavis, 1996:249)

Ariane Mnouchkine, a renowned figure in the field of intercultural theatre practice, created waves with her productions of Shakespeare's *Richard II*, *La Nuit des Rois* and *Henry IV* – widely considered to be the highlight of the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival in Los Angeles. Moreover, as this thesis indicated in its last chapter, Mnouchkine's well-received *Richard II* saw actors drawing imaginatively on Japanese Kabuki and Noh and on Chinese Peking Opera. Even though the production of *Richard II* was still a hybrid intercultural production, in its artistic achievement, the end product was so authoritative and fulfilling that it seemed a part of French heritage. Meanwhile, directed by Japanese director Yukio Ninagawa, *Medea*, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* became huge successes in Britain and elsewhere on the Continent.

These developments prompted some scholars to consider and question how such activity was going to influence the artistic identities of Oriental performing arts in cultural context or change the original performing environment. For example, Pronko raises a question whether Kabuki is still Kabuki or does it turn into something else if performed in English? He also considered how far we can go in introducing Western Conceptualism into the true experience, the spirituality of Noh, without annihilating its essence. Should we be preoccupied with the

creation of 'something new' and hybrid rather than the essence of what already exists?<sup>77</sup>

However, 'something new' here seems ambiguous and problematic. Its meaning could come from Pronko's own explanation or experience while directing two Kabuki plays in late 1960s. Since he produced them before he had any professional training in Kabuki movement or voice, they turned out completely different from that which is traditionally performed in Japan. His interpretations were more 'Western,' and of course more theatrical in the Western manner. However, as this thesis mentioned before, when Pronko tried to maintain the 'truth' of the Kabuki origin, he discovered that he would lose his audience from an authentic presentation.

Pronko's experience has raised two questions. The first one is whether or not the original essence has to be modified in favour of Western audience's taste when a Western intercultural work borrows elements from the East? If so, then this condition is confirmed by Said as he insists that cultural discourse and exchange within a culture is commonly circulated by its representation, not truth. It does not have to be argued again that language itself is a highly organised and encoded system, which utilizes many devices to express, to indicate, and to exchange written language at least. There is no delivered presence, but *re-presence*, or a representation.

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<sup>77</sup> Pronko, 1994:16

Thus Orientalism steps forth from the West from Edward Said's viewpoint, it makes more sense that Orientalism depends on the West more than on the Orient, and is directly indebted to various Western representational skills that make the Orient visible and clear in discourse. Moreover, these representations rely upon institutions, traditions, and agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects, not upon a remote and blurred-image of the Orient.

Moreover, Pronko's statement reveals another question here: how many hybrid Eastern productions that have appropriated Western classics with their own performing technique (as Kunju's *Macbeth* does), still earn nothing but reviewers' cruel critiques? Or is it just the sense of superiority of Westerners towards their own cultural heritage? If this hypothesis is established, then the unequal relationship between West and East within the phenomenon of Interculturalism is also proved by Rustom Bbarucha's argument, that this is a 'dead end' and not a 'two way street.' The reason festival critics disregarded the performance of Shanghai Kunju Theatre is also confirmed.

In the debate of whether there can be a true representation of anything or whether, as Said suggests, 'any and all representations, because they *are* representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions and political ambience of the representer,' (Said, 1978:272) is perhaps the real issue. If so, then we must be prepared to accept the fact that, as this thesis posits, a representation is intrinsically implicated, intertwined,

embedded and interwoven with a great many other things besides the truth – which itself is a representation.

Concerning the implications between Interculturalism and festival critics' preference towards both Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju Theatre's *Macbeths*, the words of Brian Singleton in his *Interculturalism* (2003) might offer an indication. As he explained, the term Interculturalism is used to describe a European art movement which was fascinated by both realism and by the mysterious exoticism of the Orient. This obsession with realism has resulted in Western theatre being ruled by exterior naturalism and realism for over two centuries and this style has become familiar to the Westerner. In contrast, traditional Japanese and Chinese art forms put more emphasis on an inner essence, which is based on the metaphysical and the abstract. Zeami Motokiyo's artistic concept will be a good example for discussion on the Japanese side.

Zeami Motokiyo (世阿弥 元清, 1363-1443), the son of Kiyotsugu Kan'ami (観阿弥 清次, 1333-1384), the founder of Noh theatre, discusses the style of Japanese art. He mentions how spectators of Noh find moments of 'no action' most enjoyable. The non-action moments, seen as the actor's 'secret art,' occur in between singing, dancing and other movements on stage. He said:

When we examine why such moments without action are enjoyable, we find that it is due to the underlying 'spiritual strength' of the actor, which unremittingly holds the attention. He does not relax the tension when the

dancing or singing comes to an end, or at intervals between the dialogue and the different types of miming, but maintains an unwavering inner strength. This feeling of inner strength will faintly reveal itself and bring enjoyment. (Chikamatsu, 1959)

Accordingly, in Noh the spectators become spiritual participants in such a non-action. In addition, Chinese traditional performing arts, such as Kunju and Peking Opera, draw on artistic principles that have been passed down since ancient times. These are significantly different from those of Western Naturalism and Realism. According to Jin Chuan (2004), the central idea in traditional Chinese aesthetics is that of the image. The production of this image delivers and breaks down the message. In so doing, it creates a unique set of aesthetic principles. These emphasize the main subject's pent-up inner motivations, pushing the artist to transcend time and space, and enter the realm of the metaphysical. Then, it reaches the position that what the physical eye perceives does not belong to the image, but that the image embodies the infinite experience of life itself. Therefore, the 'image' calls for a transcendence of form and physical environment. These aesthetic principles are applied not only to the arts but also to daily Chinese life, and they affect the entire Chinese traditional school of thought.

But in the words of Said, as obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, identity is eventually a 'construction.' This construction of identity involves the establishment of 'others,' whose actual differences from 'us' are

continuously subject to interpretation and re-interpretation.<sup>78</sup> Accordingly, spiritual and abstract might have become buzzwords associated with Chinese and Japanese traditional performing arts, and are used to construct and reinforce differences between us and others, between the East and the West.

The development of intercultural practices has flourished within the context of Orientalism as well as Globalism. Today, the identity issue is more complicated than ever before. As John Tomlinson states in *Globalization and Culture* (1999), the phenomenon of globalisation is a key issue in contemporary cultural studies, and cultural practices will be the core of this phenomenon. Based on critics' opinions towards Ninagawa's and Kunju's productions mentioned in the last chapter, it is necessary to question and explore how both productions reversed intercultural practices when presenting *Macbeth* at the Festival. As Patrice Pavis suggests in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996):

A rapprochement between two cultural areas or contexts is made easier by the investigation of common elements or of 'adaptors of reception' (Pavis, 1990a: 63): characters, forms or structural elements which assure the readability of phenomena and facilitate their movement from one area to another. (pp.10-11)

Consequently, apart from in-depth analysis of the original script, this research will examine intercultural theatre practices of both bicultural versions of *Macbeth* by identifying the performance texts and their connection with foreign elements in the following subsections.

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<sup>78</sup> Said, 1978:332

#### 4.2 Ninagawa's *Macbeth*

Although culture shock can occur anywhere, the theatres in Japan and China adopted different approaches to this new situation. To learn what and how the major elements of *Macbeth* were re-interpreted by Ninagawa's and Kunju's cultural identity, we should look into the development of Ninagawa and Kunju within their own social/ cultural contexts.

Japan has long been confronted with powerful cultural imports from the West, and the Western theatre system has become mainstream in contemporary Japanese theatre. For more than a hundred years, traditional Japanese performing arts such as Noh Theatre and Kabuki have not been taught and instead, Western acting techniques and literature are the major focus in contemporary acting schools in Japan. However, throughout its history of cultural development, Japan has always shifted its cultural emphasis by absorbing foreign culture from the major power at the time.

Historically, in Japan there are two significant turning points in cultural development: the Taika Reforms (大化の改新) and the Meiji Restoration (明治維新). During the Taika Reforms, they took both spiritual and material essences from China, and attempted to elevate their culture by this method. They appointed ambassadors to China during the Tang Dynasty, and learned new ideas about Buddhism through cultural exchange. By then, a unique Japanese

culture had been formed with a certain shape, but was restricted to the use of the Mikado (the ruler of Japan) and the aristocracy. For example, *Manyōshū*, (万葉集) written by combining kanji (漢字) and manyōgana (万葉假名), was only prevalent amongst the Mikado and the aristocrats.

After *Kokinwakasyū*, (こきんわかしゅう) written in AD 905, was published, manyōgana was simplified, hiragana (Japanese cursive syllabary) and katakana (square form of *kana* the Japanese syllabary) began to prevail; thus, cultural activities gradually spread to the public. It is noticeable that, unlike Tang (Chinese) painting, Japanese gradually created a unique 'Yamato-e' (やまと絵), which symbolized the sense of natural beauty and reflected Japanese aesthetics; also, it was regarded as foreshadowing the growth of Japanese Nationalism.

In the fourteenth century, an ideal situation for the birth of a great theatrical epoch took place in Japan, created by the synthesis of an entertainment and popular cultural tradition with a significant contribution from sophisticated artists. Transmitted through the Kagura and Sarugaku traditions, the elements of popular entertainment and primitive ritual blended with the refined performance of poetical texts, and with the profound spiritual insights of outstanding masters like Kan'ami, Zeami, and Zenchiku to bring about a significant and classical age of the Noh.



Through primitive ritual the Noh masters experienced the popular traditions and 'other' dimensions with joy, transforming them into a sublime experience, which was unexplainable in words, but was concerned with the ancient, secret tradition and vocabulary of Buddhist enlightenment. In such a 'ritual/performance' both the actor and the courtly audience shared in the blossoming of a mysterious flower in a performance of the highest rank, and experienced the journey of inner meaning in Buddhism.

After the Middle Ages, the Japanese attempted to get rid of all influences from China, and to create their own culture. For instance, unlike ancient Buddhism (that is, the so-called aristocratic Buddhism), Kamakura-style Buddhism in the Middle Ages revealed that Buddhism should belong to all people. Alongside it continued the idea of 'impermanence' as shown by downfallen aristocrats. The idea of impermanence influenced their aesthetics and thoughts of destiny, thus developing a unique Japanese pattern of thought: abandonment, and cessation. This pattern of thought is even shown in popular music and songs today. Therefore, if we look back to the Middle Ages, we can discover the formative process of Japanese culture. Thus, Ruth Benedict says in *Ju Hua Yu Jian – The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* that Japanese culture is a unique system, which is neither Buddhist nor Confucian. It is 'Japanese' – including Japanese advantages and disadvantages.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Benedict, 1946:17

For centuries, spanning the period before and after the formation of Noh, a great number of popular entertainments, such as colourful dances, juggling, acrobatics, and comical sketches, developed throughout Japan. Inserted in the process of rituals, they finally either produced necessary reforms in some elements such as performing techniques and plots or inspired new forms of theatrical entertainment. Therefore, by the seventeenth century a valuable reservoir of folk performances made it possible to establish an amazing vitality and develop a popular theatrical tradition in both Kabuki and Joruri (puppet theatre) on the basis of Noh's greatness.

During the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese completely reversed their preferences and turned to embrace Western culture. When Japan opened up in 1868, the movement of modernization swept wildly through Japan. Meanwhile, in the field of theatre, through Westernisation, the new myths of progress were translated into Shimpa and Shingeki, creating the modern drama of Japan. Through political persuasion and social involvement, Shingeki, including its recent underground and avant-garde branch theatre, finally turned out to describe the hopeless soul of a world power sharing with the other modernised nations the malaise of contemporary loneliness and despair. Meanwhile, a sentiment of tenaciousness and nostalgia for past glory and nationalistic pride supported the traditional performing arts to undergo the hard time of crisis, reform, and rebirth, making it possible to create the unique pluralistic, colourful, diverse and unbelievable spectacles of today's performing arts in Japan.

Apart from the hierarchical structure within classical theatre and whole society, in the view of Japanese people, culture has got flexibility. As the Japanese legend Saigo Takamori says: 'There are two ways to find opportunities, one is experienced accidentally, and another is created by ourselves; we must create our own opportunities by undergoing the extreme difficulties.' (Benedict, 1946:24) The theatres then, tended to imitate and admire new foreign culture, and with the awakening of their self-consciousness they began to examine, criticize, and adopt the essence of exterior cultures.

In Minamihiro's concept, the Japanese are truly fond of self-definition. During the lengthily hundred-year period of self-definition, the Japanese people continuously compared themselves with other races and never stopped searching for their true selves, through earlier Chinese culture and later Western culture. They have regarded Westerners as 'others' since the Meiji Restoration elevated Japan to a modern country. After that, controversy about Japan has been going back and forth regarding the comparison with Westerners. While collecting documents about the changes of Japanese culture, anthropologist Tamotsu Aoki mentioned that the Japanese usually narrowed down the nations they studied or conversed with to the United States, or Europe. It connotes that they only included the Westerners who were upper class, higher standard, and worth imitating in their argument.

This situation of concentrating on Western culture and abandoning indigenous traditions in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' in Japanese theatre

has been confirmed above. Respected as one of the masters of world theatre, Yukio Ninagawa is always questioned by Western audiences as to how he made his Western pieces so much in the style of the Japanese and Kabuki.

As a tradition-defying innovator, Ninagawa recalled that he was learning Stanislavski acting technique when he became an actor in the 1960s. The atmosphere then was against things of Japanese traditional drama.

Under these circumstances, Ninagawa felt a kind of emptiness towards European theatre when he was about to give up being an actor and wanted to change his path to directing. He says:

I thought I would not be able to break through present time with European methods. I strongly wanted to review the things we abandoned in the process of modernization. I used to go see Kabuki, Noh and other public theatres' performances whenever I had time... Having said that, I did not really get much influence from them. Their show was not about the present time. I did not get any influence from the texts of Japanese classical drama or traditional drama. (Ninagawa, 1999:137)

However, what influenced his attitude to face the world of drama were his theatrical experiences in childhood. When Ninagawa was very small, his parents took him to Kabuki, Noh, Kyogen and Bunraku. To Ninagawa, the stage or drama was something shining, with non-ordinal life and colourful, and it was the thing that gives Japanese people something blindingly spectacular.

Regarding the hollowness of imported culture and his reflection on the experience of traditional theatre in his childhood which reached towards the soul of human beings, Ninagawa said in an interview that his work is always a

mixture of three elements: Kabuki, Noh and Western theatre. The reason for this fusion is he wants to change the unbalanced situation between Western and traditional emphasis within Japanese theatre. Accordingly, Ninagawa's theatre concepts are not just based on Western thought but also combined with Japanese classical theatre.

Ninagawa even called himself 'a self-conscious crap actor but with a huge pride' when he was an actor in Tohai Theatre Company; based on this artistic concept and with a keen desire to subvert the existing situation, Ninagawa decided to form a new theatre company and started a directing career.

After he left Tohai Theatre Company, Ninagawa founded two theatre companies between 1968 and 1973. Although his directing career was successful in the early stages of directing political plays, the conditions were poor, whether tangible or intangible. Therefore, he then decided to dismiss the companies and accepted Tadao Nakane's invitation to direct *Romeo and Juliet* in the field of commercial theatre, in 1974. This theatrical field was somehow fresh to him, as he was served a coffee when he went into the rehearsal room, compared with when he was cleaning and making tea like everybody else, when he worked in small theatre.

However, the difference between small theatre and commercial theatre is not as simple as coffee service. In Ninagawa's own words:

After I changed my field from small theatre to commercial theatre, I started to direct a lot of Japanese classics that are based on Kabuki or Bunraku. The reason why I did this was something to do with my experiences of European classics. When I direct Shakespeare or Greek tragedy, I think of these questions; 'What will the European classical drama be if I direct it using a modern point of view?' 'What if I direct them as original plays using our modern eyes rather than just imitate European drama like Shingeki does?' After trying this, I noticed that nobody was trying anything like this with Japanese classical drama. The most important Japanese dramas are not read through properly. I felt a bit guilty about it. (Ninagawa, 1999:140-141)

As a Japanese director, this introspection about artistic concepts aroused Ninagawa to strongly employ Japanese symbols in his Western works. For example, he used *hinadan* (stairs with special dolls for Girls' day) in *Hamlet*, *butsudan* (Buddhist altar) in *Macbeth*, and *sekitei* (Japanese garden full of stones on the sand) in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Some Japanese critics thought it is nothing but Japanesque for foreigners or that Ninagawa uses things like *hinadan*, *butsudan* and *sekitei* so that he can easily be accepted by foreigners. In response to those criticisms, Ninagawa explained:

When I used *hinadan* and *butsudan*, I was thinking about Japanese audience. I was wondering how am I going to draw Japanese audience into Shakespearian world? Because in Shakespeare's words, there is lots of rhetoric based on Greek myth or Christianity and it is very difficult for Japanese people to understand. For instance, the *sekitei* set (based on the one in Ryoanji temple, Kyoto). I saw *sekitei* as universe and I thought fairies could be in universe. I thought if this play were acted on the white sand, it would be very easy for Japanese people to understand...There might be some people who know what *sekitei* is in the Western but in the case of *butsudan*, people think it is a temple. It is very difficult to convey the nuance. (Ninagawa, 1999:96-97)

In order to attract native audiences and then make them familiar with Shakespeare's works, Ninagawa presented *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* in a very

Japanese style. For example, the crowd were in traditional plebeian costumes and the protagonists adorned with typical splendid Japanese embroidery. He also used Japanese musical instruments and Bunraku-like scenes to present ordinary life. Even in his more Western-style work, *Twelfth Night*, the roles of Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek were made up with a Kabuki style of white face with dots of black for eyebrows to demonstrate their roles as clowns. Furthermore, Ninagawa works with many classical Japanese theatre stars in his productions, such as the Kabuki actors Ichikawa Somegoro in *Romeo and Juliet*, Matsumoto Koshiro IX in *Othello*, Tokushaburo Arashi in *Medea*, and Kyogen actor Mansai Nomura in *Oedipus Rex*.

However, the audiences, critics and other theatre artists inevitably question Ninagawa for his Minimalism. Ninagawa replies:

I hate a restricted stage. That reminds me of cultural people or educated people. I think drama should allow ordinary people who are facing life to forget about the present moment. Since I started calling myself an entertainer, I have been hoping to tell people's dreams that have never been told...' (Ninagawa, 1993:107)

Since his theatre practices might raise a controversial debate in Japan, why did Ninagawa start to appropriate foreign traditions, especially Shakespeare, and form his unique intercultural theatre works? Ninagawa used to work with some playwrights like Shimizu Kunio and Karajuro on native subjects during his small-theatre career, but he wanted to challenge himself in terms of something written in totally different language and social/cultural contexts; something that could

not be directed in the ways he already tried. Accordingly, Shakespeare was the most appropriate hurdle for him.

To Ninagawa, Shakespeare is not the standard holy, stoic figure that most scholars and directors think. Besides, Ninagawa was enormously influenced by a book by Mikhail M. Bakhtin.<sup>80</sup> From Ninagawa's point of view, Bakhtin's interpretation of Renaissance literature was very different from conventional ones. He analysed writers from Rabelais to Shakespeare, focusing on their carnivalesque side, including the devastating jokes and even scatology. As Ninagawa says:

His (Bakhtin's) interpretation of Shakespeare was so different from British ones and of course it was something new at that time. Bakhtin's words seemed to be ridiculing seedy-looking scholars in Japan and it was funny for me. After reading this book I recognized that my hunch 'Shakespeare is not that stoic' was right. (Ninagawa, 1999:32-33)

Besides, for Shakespeare, the stage is just like a mirror of the world, but in Ninagawa's vision this mirror is already broken into pieces, and that was a form of destiny for all theatre people in the late twentieth century. To Ninagawa, his task is to collect these bits and pieces and rebuild the world like a collage. Therefore, Ninagawa also clarifies that this 'stage/world' is quite distorted. And this distortion makes it fresh enough and beautiful enough to move people. This distorted 'stage / world' can be a magnetic field where we can weave dreams.

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<sup>80</sup> The Japanese title of this book loosely translates as *Francois Rabelais' Works and Medieval/Renaissance Culture*. Based on Nozomi Abe's opinion, this thesis would suggest it is *Rabelais and his World* in English.



Ironically, whether the view is from the practitioners of the East or West, distortion seems to be one of the principal elements in intercultural theatre practice. This principal element has been clearly confirmed by Patrice Pavis in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996), as he described 'reception, properly understood, is often the art of the qualified theft, of the productive distortion.'<sup>81</sup> So how does Ninagawa weave dreams for us in this distorted stage/world? Daniel Gallimore explained that in Ninagawa's previous productions; acting, music, lighting, and costumes are integrated in a way that can hardly fail to please.<sup>82</sup> Accordingly, this thesis would suggest that dreams are woven by Ninagawa's general concept of artistic intention, performing technique, visual image as well as music.

### **Ninagawa *Macbeth***

Ninagawa's *Macbeth*, produced in 1980 at Nissei Theatre, happens in a *butsudan* (Buddhist altar). In the opening scene, two old ladies come in and open the door of the *butsudan*. With a breeze lightly blowing and cherry blossoms gently bowing, these two Kabuki-like women talk with fear – time has gone back to the Japanese medieval era. With such strong visual imagery Ninagawa achieved a daring, but risky localization that caused a huge shock to the conventional Shakespeare production history.

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<sup>81</sup> Pavis, 1996:12

This surprising direction, depending on Japanese aesthetics, gained universality at its first appearance, and it was successfully performed in August 1985 in Amsterdam, Holland, and the Royal Lyceum Theatre in the UK (Edinburgh). Stewart Conn commented in the *Listener* after he saw the performance: 'The Toho Company's absorption of *Macbeth* into Kabuki ritual is spellbinding. Set in sixteenth century Japan it casts a searing light on the play's psychology.' (29 August 1985, p.34)

Undoubtedly, Yukio Ninagawa is famous worldwide for his direction of new plays and the classics as well as for using modern theatrical techniques and traditional aesthetics with a bold visual touch. For example, with the two mysterious old crones praying throughout the play, his *Macbeth* created a Japanese image and transformed the stage into a giant Buddhist altar, as though the story of *Macbeth* took place within the altar, as a message from the land of the dead. Most of the UK critical reception was in favour of this production. It is necessary to explore the intention for this adaptation from Ninagawa's perspective.

### **Intention of Adaptation**

This thesis mentioned previously the intention for Ninagawa to represent the works of Shakespeare not only for the purpose of challenging himself in the artistic realm, but also for Japanese people to appreciate Western masterpieces.

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<sup>82</sup> The News letter of *Europe Japan Research Centre*, Issue 3 (April 2003)

In regards to theatre as the product of culture, Ninagawa points out that the concept of culture for him was a consolation in his childhood experience.

He also explains the reason he cannot merely deal with metaphysical things is that the core spirit in his plays is the thing that is always shining in the imagination, and that people dream of. He says, 'There were times when I was about to go in such a direction (metaphysical things) but I always came back because I wanted to move people like my parents who only went to primary school, who expected drama to be visually "brilliant."' (Ninagawa, 1999:147)

He further emphasises that culture and entertainment at that time were much brighter than modern drama or entertainment, and people strongly needed that. He says, 'I was taken to see these things and sometimes I slept, but as a whole, I think I was attracted by them. I guess that I was not moved by the music or action but by the fact that "people passionately seek for culture."' (Ninagawa, 1999:147)

Due to his youthful experience, this 'brilliance' theory becomes the vital soul within Ninagawa's works. His approach is always the same no matter if he is directing Japanese classics or European dramas. Ninagawa states that 'I simply make effort to recreate the bright things that I saw as a child.'<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, with respect to the audience, Ninagawa always takes spectators into account when he creates his works.

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<sup>83</sup> Ninagawa, 1999:147

Considering the notion that he respects the audience and satisfies them giving them the passion to 'seek for culture,' it could be suggested that it comes from the humility of Ninagawa himself.

Furthermore, Ninagawa believes that his humility and respect to the original script helps him to gain further inspiration. He says, 'sometimes directors cut and add lines, I never do that. My direction is in the framework that my life can only be told by somebody else's words. If I cut and paste, my framework would collapse.' (Ninagawa, 1993:103-104) Although the reality seems contradictory to his own words, that Ninagawa says he would never 'cut and add' lines of the original text, in order for a Japanese audience to easily appreciate *Macbeth*, this thesis would suggest that Ninagawa not only transferred the setting of this Western work into the world of the Japanese samurai, but also modified the lines and terms.

Script analysis is not the major focus of this research; instead, this thesis pays attention mainly to the exploration of performance text in which the form of presentation and technical elements are included. However, there is still a need to discuss briefly the text alteration in order to explain the intention for Ninagawa to modify the script and meet audiences' needs.

Based on Yuji Odajima's translation of *Macbeth*, Ninagawa edited the original script and deleted some of the lines in which the audience needed historical and

allegorical knowledge to understand. For example, Ninagawa cut some lines in Act I, Scene I of Shakespeare's text:

First Witch: I come, Graymalkin!

Second Witch: Paddock calls.

Third Witch: Anon.

Without any historical and allegorical knowledge, the words Graymalkin and Paddock are difficult to understand for Japanese people. Furthermore, in Act I, Scene II, Ninagawa cuts most of the Sergeant's lines and even changes the word of Norwegian to 'Northern' for continuity with the background of the story in this Japanese version of *Macbeth*. According to the evidence discussed above, this thesis confirms the intention of Ninagawa is to adapt *Macbeth* for a Japanese audience.

Although Ninagawa directed *Macbeth* in the concept of the samurai world, the presentation was totally in a Western style. Most of the reviewers stress that the reason his performance style is so attractive is that Ninagawa also employs Western theatre techniques by employing the form of Realism to create visually and acoustically splendid effects. This is apart from the intention of adaptation, based on Pavis' theory that Western audiences are 'struck' by the acting, set, costumes as well as lighting and music when they watch a performance.<sup>84</sup> The

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<sup>84</sup> Pavis, 1996:172

following sections will explore all the ingredients Pavis suggests within these Japanese and Chinese productions of *Macbeth*.

### **Performing Technique**

One intention in this research is to identify how the form of Western Realism has been employed in Ninagawa's *Macbeth* and even achieves a great result with the critics as mentioned previously. Through the exploration of the acting technique, this thesis would suggest that it is the 'Japanese-Realism' which has hybridised Western Realism and Japanese classical theatre arts. Because Ninagawa directed *Tango at the End of Winter*, in London, a Japanese play performed by British actors, he was shocked by British Realism that is based on strong identity, and he also noticed that the Japanese could always make a formula without notice by the director. Ninagawa then made a statement:

When it comes to real or realism, Japanese theatre has a huge advantage. Japanese theatre has a sort of tense strength. This strength is not that of formula or realistic things but the theatrical strength that can be gained when acting and the direction runs between formula and realistic things. It seems that British theatre or European theatre does not have this strength as they only have realism and they lack formula. I would like to bring this theatrical strength to fight abroad. (Ninagawa, 1999:136)

Therefore, the formula acting technique is one of the features in Japanese classical theatre. With the combination of the Japanese formula and Western realistic acting techniques in *Macbeth*, audiences in the West do not need to be

educated to understand this kind of performing style, but they do appreciate a fresh approach to the play.

Besides that, actors appearing from the auditorium is one of Ninagawa's common theatrical techniques, which is taken from both Western and Kabuki styles. At the beginning of the play, most of the actors appear from the auditorium, such as the two crones' first appearance, soldiers passing the information that Duncan will be beaten by Macbeth, Macbeth asking the witches for advice, and so on. Apart from the performance technique, visual imagery has been a significant feature as Yukio Ninagawa's trademark. The visual image can be divided into set and lighting, costume and make up, and the next paragraph will examine how this trademark works in *Macbeth*.

## **Visual Image**

### **Set and Lighting**

'I have been using sets, lights and music as well as crowds to make dramatic spaces,' states Ninagawa.<sup>85</sup> Some people argue that Ninagawa is a 'visual-orientated' director; however, others say that his works are full of 'false decoration' with crowds on stage. In response to this argument, Ninagawa explains his theory:

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<sup>85</sup> 1999:95

In the commercial world, audience are not necessarily theatre lovers as opposed to the audience in small theatres. There are many passive audience like invited people or tourists...I thought about the strategy and I reached to the point that in a big theatre, visual and auditory information are very important (although some people might want to call them 'false decoration')... (Ninagawa, 1999:78-81)

Moreover, Ninagawa was shocked by the theatrical space after he moved from a four-hundred-seat small theatre to a two-thousand-seat commercial theatre, where the length of the stage was enlarged from four and half meters to forty meters. Regarding this shift, he was worried about how to fill the auditorium and make audiences feel involved. Aside from the actors' extremely powerful expressions, Ninagawa adopted strong visual images as a further approach to make audiences feel involved and raise their memory toward each person's life and individual history.

In addition, Ninagawa revived 'the pleasure for the eyes' as his theory for set designing. To Ninagawa, Japanese theatre was losing visual factors in the modern process of the Shingeki movement in which logic and lines are especially important. As a result, drama became more auditory, rather than visual, and it offered pleasures for the brain. Both logic and lines are important, but originally 'kangeki' (theatre going) was a very visual experiment as in kanji or kangeki (kangeki in kanji literally means to 'watch a play'). Ninagawa believes, when drama is not visual enough, it cannot be recognised as a perfect form of expression. Therefore, when he is planning his direction, he always thinks about set design first.



Therefore, people in Europe described his play as 'Ninagawa's kaleidoscope.' While classical drama for Ninagawa is not shabby black and white pictures but a very vigorous and colourful world, his colour sense in theatre, as he mentions, might come from his youthful experiences. At the very least, he was influenced and touched by the atmosphere of stages conveying a bright world.

Regarding his 1985 version of *Macbeth*, '*Ninagawa Macbeth*', some people questioned Ninagawa's way and limitations in modifying Shakespeare's original works when he used *butsudan* (Buddhist altar) on stage and re-set Macbeth and Duncan as samurai. Ninagawa explains in the *Thousand Knives, Thousand Eyes* (1993):

If the writer is alive, of course I ask him for permission. But when it comes to classics, as long as the director's framework is persuasive for both the text and audience, I think that is good. Nobody can really judge this kind of thing but I make myself believe that I have one thousand eyes of people's thoughts. Let's say I make these decisions late at night trembling with fear... the other thing is that I feel sort of emptiness about imitating Western people – the gesture, make-up, all the visuals. Blonde wigs and tights embarrass me. I feel excluded by the play. I have to think of a plan to overcome these problems. In the case of *Macbeth*, the solution was *butsudan*. (pp.105-106)

In the reality of the *butsudan* as the significant feature in the scenery of *Ninagawa Macbeth*, for each family in memory of their ancestors, the Buddhist altar in Japan is sacrosanct. The idea of employing the land of the dead as an image in *Macbeth* is from Ninagawa's sorrowful memory. Ninagawa's father died during the period of preparation of the production. He recalls the moment, 'I went home and was mumbling in front of *butsudan* something like "I'm back

dad..." and I lit a stick of incense.' (Ninagawa, 1999:100-101) Immediately, Ninagawa noticed that he should deal with *Macbeth* not as somebody else but as something inside him. Accordingly, he thought he should communicate with *Macbeth* as he communicated to the dead in front of *butsudan*. Then the story of *Macbeth* becomes an indigenous story and every audience in Japan will be familiar with it.

Aside from the Buddhist altar, Ninagawa employs other Japanese symbols to get ordinary people's attention. For instance, he uses Japan's national flower – cherry blossom, to create the atmosphere of 'the spirit of cherry blossoms,' in which the Japanese think life should be performed just like cherry blossoms, fading in the bloom of beauty without any hesitation. Death for them seems to be the perfect ending of life. That idea, obsessed by extreme beauty and the present, influenced many Japanese people, and somehow became part of their personalities. They searched for the moment of beauty even though it was just temporary.

As the economy suffered a downturn in the 1990's, there were many people working as administrators who committed suicide; the Japanese pop-star Hide (ex-guitarist in X-Japan Band) committed suicide by hanging, because he reached a difficult point in his composing. Based on this evidence, which expresses the important elements in this race, they want to present their best and most beautiful moment to the world, like cherry blossoms fading in the bloom of beauty and leaving people an eternal memory.

According to Merrily Baird who is a retired US Government intelligence officer, cherry blossoms are Japan's most beloved flowers. Because of their short blooming span and fragility, they have become the symbol of transient life, which is one of the crucial teachings in Buddhism. Also, cherry trees blossom all together, so they have also been used as metaphors for clouds, which also symbolises something unpredictable in human life. Faded and fallen blossoms symbolise snow, and are also a metaphor for a warrior killed in his early life.<sup>86</sup> Baird's explanation is also proved by Ninagawa's *Macbeth's* Edinburgh official programme booklet that cherry blossom 'is not only beautiful; it is sinister and deceptive; its dazzle can turn men mad.' Undoubtedly, this thesis would suggest that the image and metaphor of cherry blossoms perfectly match Shakespeare's original concept of *Macbeth*.

From Ninagawa's point of view, the idea of using cherry trees for Birnam Wood was shocking. He suggests that we should not depend on the audience's imagination too much. To Ninagawa, Macbeth was astonished and changed his personality when the wood began to move, and it has to be that shocking.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, as he learned from one of Kajii Morojiro's novels that describes a dead body under a cherry tree, Ninagawa echoes that there is a certain connection between cherry trees and the dead. As Ninagawa states, 'there is always a smell of the dead under cherry trees. I wanted to do *Macbeth* in such an atmosphere.' (Ninagawa, 2002:239) Besides, when Macbeth was finally

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<sup>86</sup> Baird, 2001:48-50

enthroned, he and his wife wore robes embroidered with cherry blossom decoration – speaking of their tragic fate. Consequently, all the metaphors that relate to cherry blossoms in this production are mainly for the reception of the Japanese audience. However, it also creates a visually splendid phenomenon for Westerners to appreciate.

Likewise, more Western theatre characteristics can be discovered in this production. For instance, the application of gauze is pretty common in Western, but not in Japanese, classical theatre. The door of *butsudan* here is made by gauze-like material, so that many scenes are performed behind the gauzed *butsudan*; for example, the dance of the three witches in the first scene. This is an absolutely Western performing style, which creates a vague and misty image.

Moreover, the pleasure for the eyes is not just huge sets full of props, but also the provocative sense of colours on stage, whether it involves sets, costumes or lighting. Through such research carried by the author of this thesis, the image can be received from his works. Ninagawa employs lots of red and other primary colours in his works, which stimulate and provoke excitement. Harada Tamotsu (吉井 澄雄), the lighting designer who has done fifty shows with Ninagawa, describes Ninagawa's concept: 'The fact that Ninagawa's world is full of carnivalesque factors (such as freedom from this society's system, deviation of common sense and the union of opposite points) is important.' (Ninagawa, 1999:121)

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<sup>87</sup> Ninagawa, 2002:238-239

If you see Japanese modern plays or Western plays at that time, it is well designed and the gradation of the lights is stunning but I thought it was too clean. It was just like reading an essay or thesis. My heart was not dancing then. It might have been typical European style but I did not like that. And to overcome this, I learned Tou and Hijikata's colours (shocking combination of colours) and let the provocative colours dance on my stage. I think I was doing it quite consciously even when I was doing my shows in Shinjyuku. (Ninagawa, 1999:100)

Accordingly, the visual lighting in Ninagawa *Macbeth* significantly creates various kinds of atmospheres, collocating with the entire performance to portray the whole story. Moreover, the timing of the lighting is perfectly designed, well performed on the huge set, and brings up a great interaction with the scenery.

### **Costume and Make up**

With the story set in sixteenth century Japan, the design of costumes in this production realistically presents the period of the samurai world. For example, the soldiers are in samurai dress and all the nobles are in proper costumes. Moreover, the make-up for the three witches, Lady Macbeth, and Macbeth are mostly in Kabuki style – dead white, but there is also a shadow on Macbeth's bridge of the nose and eye socket to emphasise his character.<sup>88</sup>

### **Music**

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<sup>88</sup> See Appendix 5.

Renowned British critic Michael Billington describes Ninagawa as a director who can use imagery, movement, and music to create a dream-like world.<sup>89</sup> 'When I want to create a strong "dramatic scene" from the very beginning, I use sound,' says Ninagawa.<sup>90</sup> As one of the vital parts in his artistic concepts, music plays an essential role in all his works. Especially after he moves into commercial theatre, he says, 'When we have shows in big theatres and when we want to engage all audiences to the emotion on stage, sound is the most effective factor.' (Ninagawa, 1999:105-106)

Moreover, Ninagawa points out that he always uses music he likes at the time. This effective factor creates not only an audio picture, but also visual emotion, such as the cellists on stage playing Bach in *Twelfth Night* and 'gagaku' (Japanese traditional court music) in *Oedipus Rex* presenting a majestic scene. In *Macbeth*, Ninagawa's choice of music is equally catholic. There is 'Bach in the House', but there are also melodies from a Bulgarian choir, as well as music from the world music duo 'Dead Can Dance', whose opening piece, 'The Host of Seraphim', is the perfect accompaniment to the bewitching by the 'three weird sisters' (as they are known in Japan).

Consequently, in his works, music connects emotions with the audience. Sound and music are the factors which allow the audience to sense the base of the emotion and atmosphere of the play. Although people give negative feedback

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<sup>89</sup> *The Guardian*, 31 March 2003, p.22

<sup>90</sup> Ninagawa, 1999:105-106

on his music, Ninagawa explains in the *Thousand Knives, Thousand Eyes* (1993),

Some audience says that the music in my plays is too loud but what can I say? This world is filled with noise and music ... I love music. It is part of my life. I read and make plans with music. I cannot work without music. When I use music in plays, I think of the rhythm and the direction of the story. (pp. 110-111)

Accordingly, music plays a significant role within this Japanese *Macbeth*, and also achieves acoustical splendour. For example, in the beginning, before the door of *butsudan* was opened, lighting projects the shadows created by gobos onto the door of *butsudan*, and the sound of temple chimes floats in the air from a distance, which creates an atmosphere of isolation and desolation. Followed by Fauré's Requiem, the opening atmosphere is full of imagery of 'the land of dead.'

Besides, the sound of thunder, sounds of temple chimes, birds' singing, insects' noise, crows' crying, the rhythm of battle drums, and so on – appropriately create a certain atmosphere and strengthen the tension in the entire play. Lady Macbeth also plays cello on stage, which visually conflicts this Western instrument with this Japanese production. Although the cello itself or its 'voice' is commonly used as a symbol of deep emotion, misty thoughts, or darkness, the music here is full of prolongation and leaping intervals, mostly dissonant, which represents Lady Macbeth's restless emotion and stressful mentality. At the end of the play, the sound of the chimes and Fauré's music appears again. This

acoustical image attached to the fallen cherry blossoms not only connects with the spirit of dead, but also creates an astonishing picture.

Considering the examination of Ninagawa's *Macbeth* above, this thesis identifies the essence of this production was still a purely Westernised performance. Apart from some Kabuki-like movement, Realism elements are significantly presented in this production. For example, sets are built to represent real locations, as presenting a realistic acting style and martial arts (although they have been simplified). Costumes and special effects are produced as realistically as possible, such as the use of blood when the warriors get injured and when Lady Macbeth kills Duncan, and also the vivid props (such as horses), and whole cherry trees in the movement of the forest.

In order to meet the Japanese audiences' need, other Japanese elements are also employed; for example, at the beginning of the show, two old crones face the entrance of *butsudan*, kneel down, and touch the ground with their foreheads, then return to either side of the proscenium arch, eat a Japanese meal and watch this tragedy unfold. All of these are like a ceremony which Ninagawa experienced in his childhood when ordinary people watched the shows. At the end of show, the two crones close the door of the *butsudan*, kneel down, and touch the ground with their foreheads again to worship their ancestors.



Unquestionably, Ninagawa's hybridisation of *Macbeth*, explored above, received approval from Festival critics. Even Robert Dawson Scott wrote in the Glasgow Herald after he saw Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeth*: 'anyone who is expecting a re-run of the majestic Japanese *Macbeth* of 1985 is in for a disappointment.' (26 August 1987, p.4) So why was Kunju *Macbeth* not appreciated by those Festival critics? Next, this thesis will look into Kunju's characters and development as well as this intercultural practice of Kunju *Macbeth* within its own social and cultural context.

### 4.3 Kunju's *Macbeth*

Kunju was once called Kunshan Qiang (崑山腔) or Kunqu. Different from the Beijing Opera based on a certain rhythm and skills, Kunju is a type of drama that mainly focuses on classic tunes and lyrics. According to legend, the initial melody was composed by a Kunshan resident named Jian Gu (顧堅) in the late Yuan Dynasty. During the Jiajing Period (嘉靖 AD.1522-1566) in the Ming Dynasty, Liang-fu Wei (魏良輔) made an effort towards Kunju's innovation, so that its singing style became very delicate as if refined or polished. Then, Chen-yu Liang (梁辰漁) was the playwright who first composed a decent script for the new-style Kunju. During the Wanli Period (萬曆 AD.1573-1619) of the Ming Dynasty, there were a large number of scripts being composed, and they soon

spread from Suchou (蘇州) to all regions of the Yangtze River. After that, it continued spreading and finally replaced other theatre styles in the south.

During Emperor Kangxi's (康熙) second patrol to the south of China, in the Qing Dynasty, the Institution of Jiangsu (江蘇) gathered a lot of Kunju actors to perform for the Empire, and the better actors would later serve at the inner court of the Palace as well as teaching at Shang-Lin-Fa-Bu (上林法部). Also, during the Qianlong (乾隆) Period, Kunju prevailed over whole areas which later helped it reach its golden age.

Meanwhile, Kunju theatres were the most popular place to find entertainment. In this category, there are two types of theatres – one was the court theatre, and the other was secular theatre. Afterwards, Kunju was categorized as one of the court theatres, and the others were called folk (local) theatres, which were generally called Luantan (亂彈). The former represents the sacred characteristic, and the latter represents powerful and popular taste. From the Wanli to the Qianlong Periods, Kunju spread and became popular over two hundred years, so that it gradually became a mainstream form and was honoured as 'The Origin of Theatres.'

The lyrics of Kunju are deep, classical, and refined. Also, its literature value is beautiful and exceptional, like old poems or prose; thus it earned a laudatory title – 'poetic drama.' However, for the general public this type of abstruse language

was not easy to appreciate, so that it led to an estrangement between theatre and the audience.

In contrast, the folk theatres were rising at that time, such as Bangzi (梆子), Pihuang (皮黃), and so on. They shared and exchanged experiences, which brought their singing skills and performing styles to maturity. Among them, Pihuang was on the cusp and gradually dominated the theatres; thus it was renamed Peking Opera. As developed to this point, Kunju inevitably declined.

Following, in the early twentieth century, Chinese theatre culture, which had just passed its classical period, had begun its modernizing transformation under political stress. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, China's exigency was that Qing decayed in the course of time; the great powers invaded from European countries and even advocated dismembering China. Besides, Japan had also acted to annex parts of China. It was such a dangerous crisis that many patriots made a great effort to advocate and proclaim revolution, to implant the idea of democracy, and fight against being invaded. That was also the theatre's evolution under stress.

During the Tungzhi (同治)/Guanshu (光緒) periods in the late Qing Dynasty, the theatre of that time, particularly the Peking Opera, having undergone a glorious time, had a group of influential actors (known as 'Tung Guang Thirteen' – 同光十三絕), and established the basis for the standards of the Peking Opera as a national theatre. However, the Peking Opera, as the contemporary mainstream

culture of entertainment, seemed not to do anything for the social (or even national) exigency except for aesthetic studying and entertaining. As Chi-chou Liang (梁啟超) says, 'There is nobody responding to the realistic world but amusing [sic].' (Shi 2003, p.11) Thus, the advocate of theatrical evolution emphasized the social function of theatre, attempted to arouse people, as well as change society and the human spirit. Then, Za-Ju, Chuan-Qi, and the Peking Opera started putting on plays involving 'topical events.'

In response to the cultural influence of Western powers, the Peking Opera and Kunju were trying to have a social function. However, it was not easy for them to modify their artistic essence with a realistic presentation style and be concerned with contemporary social issues. This strait was especially experienced by the Kunju theatre as it had already developed for more than four hundred years and most Kunju traditions were difficult to transform and meet social expectations. This difficulty marginalised Kunju far away from the social need and led it further into decline.

Nevertheless, throughout the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), most artists were treated as tramps by the central government and had to quit their artistic careers. During that time all artistic activities became tools of political propaganda. Under the slogans of 'Ruin the Four Olds (traditions)' and 'Destroy Blind Capitalism,' the classical and traditional repertoires were not allowed to

perform. In ten years, there was nothing produced in arts but Models (樣板戲).<sup>91</sup>

However, it was not powerful enough to perform Models restricted to only eight 'Model groups.' Therefore, promoting the Models as an important task was advocated in the agenda. According to Yi-lueng Gao's arguments, the *People's Daily*<sup>92</sup> released a slogan 'introducing Models to our country' as an agenda on June 18 1967.<sup>93</sup> Then, the *People's Daily* as well as the *Light Daily*,<sup>94</sup> the *Freedom Daily*,<sup>95</sup> and the *Wenwei Daily*<sup>96</sup> all released an article called 'Models' Popularisation and Revolution.' They attempted to push and popularise these Models around the whole country.

Afterwards, there were large numbers of 'Models for Promoting Revolution' classes established throughout the country. Groups of members in Models companies went to Beijing and Shanghai to study the Models. Initially, they just copied the original styles from Peking Opera and performed exactly the same thing. Then, the Models were spread across the whole country, so each local theatre company located in any province, city, or borough started transplanting the Models; even the most distant areas, such as Tibet and Shinjiang, learned

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<sup>91</sup> Initially, there were eight artistic works seen as 'Models of promoting revolution,' including Peking Opera's *Takeover of Wei-Hu Mountain* (智取威虎山), *The Legend of the Red Lantern* (紅燈記), *The Harbor* (海港), *Sha Jia Bang* (沙家濱), and *Sweeping the White Tiger Regiment* (奇襲白虎團); ballet drama *The White-haired Girl* (白毛女), and *Red Woman Detachment* (紅色娘子軍), and Symphony *Sha Jia Bang* (沙家濱). Afterwards, more Peking Operas were produced, including *Hymn of Dragon River* (龍江頌), and *Azalea Mountain* (杜鵑山).

<sup>92</sup> A Chinese newspaper.

<sup>93</sup> Gao, 1999:282

<sup>94</sup> A Chinese newspaper.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> A Chinese newspaper.

the Models. As to transplanting the Models, both the *People's Daily* and the *Wenwei Daily* editorialised that the local theatres must follow exactly the principles of the Models, and revolutionarily change their art styles; besides, they must strictly perform the 'same thing' without breaking the rules and learning from the Peking Opera.

This time was, in some way, a great period for the Peking Opera to develop and polish its artistic evolution. However, the rest of the performing arts forms in China were in chaos. In fact, Kunju troupes were all dismissed, some performers were called to participate in Models teams, and the rest of them were sent to reclaim wasteland. After the Cultural Revolution, the Kunju troupes were re-established in 1978. According to Yang Fang, an artist in the Shanghai Kunju Theatre, most Kunju scripts were destroyed during the ten years of Cultural Revolution by the Red Guards because of anti-traditions. Even though some of these scripts were recovered from memory, there were still enormous amounts of treasures which were lost forever. This included not only the scripts, but also the loss of many valuable artists. Besides, the movements and basic skills were different between the Models and Kunju. In order to regain the sense and skills of Kunju, Fang claimed that transforming those skills back to Kunju's manner could not be done in one or two days, it was a time-consuming task.<sup>97</sup>

It was not until the early 1980s that the Chinese Ministry of Culture called on surviving Kunju artists, as well as artists from other traditional theatre forms, to

resume their art. Even so, there was a lack of consistent support for Kunju performances. Kunju was staged only sporadically, even in the 1990s. With the opening of China's domestic market to the West in the late 1980s, the Chinese began to have more entertainment options. In the face of stiff competition from modern entertainment, a major challenge for Kunju today is in its preservation. The Chinese government demonstrated support for the art form with the formation of the Kunju Committee in 1986 under its Ministry of Culture. The committee had specific aims to protect, conserve, renew and develop Kunju, but Kunju was still very much in decline. The lack of audience and performers, loss of repertoire, and the absence of a scientific and sustained approach to the revival of artistic form were obstacles to Kunju's innovation and further development.<sup>98</sup>

The master of the Peking Opera, Lan-fang Mei (梅蘭芳), insisted that actors had to learn Kunju before they did Pihuang (Peking Opera). There were two reasons: the first one is that Kunju had been performed and been popular in Beijing for several hundred years before Pihuang appeared as a form of folk theatre. People were accustomed to it, and still expected to see it.

The second reason is that Kunju's performing style, expressions, and tunes are pretty strict, so it was especially helpful if one practised these as basic skills before learning Pihuang because many skills in Pihuang are actually adopted

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<sup>97</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Fang Yang, Shanghai, 21 May 2004, see Appendix 6.3

<sup>98</sup> Zhu 2002, <http://www.kunqu.net/article38.htm>

from Kunju. The first reason above may not exist anymore; however, Kunju's performing style is still the most delicate, refined, and complex. Each word, each sentence, each tune and rhythm must cooperate with its figure and dance, and then reach the prospect of perfection. Such a meaningful performing style definitely is the source of other traditional theatres, so they needed to learn from Kunju to enrich their own performing experiences. The older generation spent a lot of energy to create Kunju's figure, then the later generation made a great effort to innovate it and preserve such an artistic quintessence. That is why Kunju is so valuable as a reference point for actors of Peking Opera. Thus, beginners mostly learned Kunju's figures first as a solid basic training when they started learning Peking Opera.

Traditionally, the arts in Kunju emphasised movements and songs, while set and lighting were not well presented. Since the system of Western theatre was absorbed by Chinese classical theatre, Kunju started developing its own stage arts based on its tradition, lyric skills, forms, particular and harmonious language skill, and rhythm, alongside with Western directors, stage design and lighting aesthetics. Consequently, as an example of intercultural practice, Kunju *Macbeth* appropriated not only foreign texts, but also Western theatre techniques. In order to identify the implication of such borrowing, it is worth starting with the discussion of intention of adaptation.



### Intention of Adaptation

Based on those innovations and developments discussed above, Kunju started to transform its traditions in order to meet artistic demands and audience requirements. One of the experiments was the creation of Kunju *Macbeth*, which appropriated Western text and turned it into a Chinese presentation. Since Kunju has existed for over four hundred years, its golden age is almost the same epoch as Shakespeare's time. This is such a significant issue in history, that the art of theatre in both East and West reached a hardly-transcended peak at the same time. In 1986 Shanghai Kunju Theatre adapted Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and entitled it *The Bloody Hand* (so-called Kunju *Macbeth*) which was presented at China's first Shakespeare Festival.

In the following year, this production was introduced to Edinburgh, and went on a European tour. In fact, it is unusual for a Western play to be interpreted with lyrical Chinese figures and styles; however, it unfolded the rich creativity and digestibility of Chinese traditional theatre towards the Western texts. In this case, forms of Eastern and Western theatres were no longer just separate, but shared their sources.

Regarding the adaptation on this intercultural theatre practice, as Patrice Pavis suggested 'the Goals of the adaptors' in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996):

Every relationship with a foreign culture is determined by the purpose of the artists and cultural mediators who undertake its adaptation and its transmission. This purpose is as much aesthetic as ideological and, often remains implicit or unconscious. Most often, the adaptor is not someone specifically charged with transposing the contents and forms from one cultural shore to another. It is rather a group of enunciators intervening at all levels and at every stage of the production. (pp.16-17)

The purpose of adapting *Macbeth* is to introduce Chinese people to Shakespearean art, and at the same time introduce the British to Chinese national culture and arts. Also, another purpose is to maintain and re-produce these two high-quality theatre styles as well as to try to strengthen their classical, artistic lives, because both of them have developed across four centuries, reached the peak in theatrical arts, and presented the most important artistic forms in the East and West. Thus, the artistic director Zuo-lin Huang (黃佐臨) decided that the style in this play must present 'Chinese,' 'Kunju,' and also 'Shakespeare's' essence. In Huang's word:

The exquisite essence of Kunju, its elegant and powerful poetry and its beautifully stylized dances make it stand head and shoulders above other forms of Chinese theatre, and all these elements constitute a form that a Shakespeare adaptation needs. Both Kunju and Shakespeare were popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Both comprise poetic drama and both employ non-realistic stage effects. (Ruru Li, 1994:1)

Besides, Kunju *Macbeth* originates from a Shakespeare play, so it must not ignore the meaningful Shakespearean influence. In Huang's concept, Shakespeare's style is lyrical and poetic in general, and Kunju is honoured as 'The Origin of Theatres' as the most lyrical and poetic theatre style in Chinese traditional forms as well as containing the richest and most elegant performing

skills; therefore, it is exceptionally gifted in natural resources to present the spirit of Shakespeare.

Therefore the Kunju *Macbeth* utilized an entirely Chinese historical story and theatre traditions. Zuo-lin Huang offered the suggestion to the actors in advance that he 'will not make a production in a spoken drama style. *The Bloody Hand* will conform to Kunju's own rules and it will be a Kunju production of a Shakespeare's play.'<sup>99</sup> Under Huang's guidance, the adaptation that Ruru Li mentioned was achieved both in the script and rehearsals. The audience would not even notice the performance was adapted from the Western classic unless they were informed.

Ruru Li also explained in the *Blood-stained Hands: Macbeth in Kunju Form* that because *Macbeth* is the shortest work of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays, it was advantageous for Kunju to adapt it into a Kunju performance, because Kunju requires a text with flexible time and space to demonstrate performance skills such as singing, reciting, acting and dancing.<sup>100</sup>

In order to maintain the Chinese style and facilitate the audience's understanding of the whole story, the adaptation of the plot is set in a Chinese dynasty and is presented with a new title *The Bloody Hand*. In the adaptation, Ma Pai (Macbeth) quelled an armed rebellion and won distinction; therefore, he received a great reward from Zheng Wang (King Duncan). However, Ma Pai's

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<sup>99</sup> Li, 1994:7

ambition and his wife urged him to murder Zheng Wang and grab the throne. After he had successfully done this, Ma Pai continuously killed other people who disagreed with him and committed a lot of crimes. Finally, this couple were deserted and all alone and finished their evil lives as the whole army revenged itself.

The adapter attempted to make the characters and performing style acceptable to that of Chinese and Kunju whilst preserving Shakespeare's original ideas. There are three witches, 'Beauty and Ugliness,' 'Good and Evil,' and 'Genuine and Sham,' reflecting Ma Pai's thinking. In an additional scene, 'Craziness', there are many ghosts murdered by Tie Shi (Lady Macbeth) trying to take their revenge at her. In this scene, the traditional technique of firing (Which is the fire that comes out from an actor's mouth) is successfully applied and achieved a significant stage effect.

So how was this *Macbeth* represented in 'Chinese,' 'Kunju' as well as a 'Shakespearean' manner? It would be helpful to explore the performance text on this intercultural work. This exploration includes performance technique, visual imagery and music as this thesis did previously with *Ninagawa Macbeth*.

## Performing Technique

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<sup>100</sup> Li, 1994:1

The master of Peking Opera, Lang-fang Mei, once said that actors should not be trapped within the forms, but apply them with good flexibility.<sup>101</sup> In Kunju *Macbeth* the acting techniques have completely conformed to the traditional theatrical style, but the innermost emotions in roles are much more complex than the fixed forms in traditional skills. As the hardships occurred in the Models, therefore, the roles in plays had to apply other skills borrowed from different performing styles in order to interpret innermost emotions. For example, in Ma Pai's (*Macbeth*) first appearance, he wears a helmet, a bright red warrior robe, and sports a black beard, and a crowd of soldiers clusters round him while martial music is played, showing his heroic spirit of bravery and skilfulness in fighting, leadership, rebellion quelling, and a triumphant return. Zheng-hua Ji, the actor playing as Ma Pai, says in the interview with the present researcher:

When I was glorified in the King's statement, I freely and easily waved the horsewhip with great vigour in order to vividly present a statesman with great achievements. I borrowed some techniques from *wu sheng* (武生), which is the role impersonated martial man, to present the commander's heroic posture...I have specialized in *lau sheng* (老生); the role impersonated old man, for a while and I found it impossible to find a model like Ma Pai in this category. Interpreting Ma Pai I needed to not only break through the style, but also create Ma Pai's own characteristic. I had to come up with a channel to perfectly interpret this character and meanwhile to bring Kunju's uniqueness into full play. Then, this play would be free and flexible in a regular pattern, and the character would be more meaningful.<sup>102</sup>

Furthermore, in the fourth scene 'Disturbing Feast', Ma Pai decides to commit a crime. He murders Zheng Wang and General Du Ge (*Banquo*), and finally

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<sup>101</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Zheng-hua Ji, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.5.

comes to the throne. Ma Pei then becomes a complete tyrant – he is arrogant, but restless in his inner life like a burning fire. The appearance of Du Ge's ghost suddenly touches off the guilt in his heart. He suffers so much that he is temporarily out of his mind. Zheng-hua Ji boldly applied figures and actions from *hua lien* (花臉), *wu sheng* and clown (丑), following up with techniques such as beard shaking, head (hair) swinging, pacing, kneeling-down, sword play, and so on. Suddenly, the tension rise, and the creepy feeling increase as Ma Pai lose his mind.

As in Ninagawa's *Macbeth*, male actors perform the three witches in the Kunju *Macbeth*. In order to distinguish Western and Eastern witches, in Kunju *Macbeth* two of the three witches appear with 'dwarf action,'<sup>103</sup> a special technique in Chinese theatre. Then there are two short witches and one tall performing and dancing in Kunju style on the stage, completely presenting the Chinese atmosphere. Apart from the dwarf action, there are some movements showing Chinese theatre characteristics, such as *chi ba* (起霸 – the dressing action before military officer campaigns), somersault, and acrobatic combat. In addition, in Kunju *Macbeth* a parrot is added into the plot. According to the assistant director Ming-rong Zhang, Lady Macbeth's brutality is revealed as she kills the parrot by twisting its neck. Afterwards, the parrot appears as a ghost, and joins in part of a dance, which is absolutely in the Chinese as well as Kunju's style. However, the addition of a parrot was not enjoyed by all of the

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<sup>102</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Zheng-hua Ji, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.5.

critics. Francis King stated in the *Sunday Telegraph*, 'there is something risible, for example, in finding that Lady Macbeth possesses not merely a wronged sister but also a parrot...' (30 August 1987, p.13)

In this play, Chinese thought patterns are fully represented. The Chinese believe in moral cause and effect, which means people will receive bad consequences if they do something evil. Chinese traditional theatre especially focuses on this point. Therefore, in the scene that Tie Shi (Lady Macbeth) wandered while sleeping, those ghosts showed up and tried to take their revenge on her. Besides, the adapter, Shi-feng Zheng, thinks that there are some remarkable scenes in Kunju such as 'The Startling Dream' in *The Peony Pavilion*, 'Dreaming' in *Lan Ke Shan* (欄柯山), and so on, and those performing skills are so meaningful that they can perfectly depict the atmosphere of dream. Thus, he applies this idea in Tie Shi (Lady Macbeth), and emphasizes it.

Also, in the final scene there is a dance by soldiers holding branches, which represents their fighting back by disguising themselves as a forest. Those branches, as props, are too realistic in Kunju's tradition; however, applied with martial action, somersaults, and other meaningful performing techniques lessens the dramatic conflict. Besides the realistic props, the set and lighting in this production were also influenced by Western theatre techniques. The next section will discuss how Western techniques and manners, in terms of visual image, were adapted in this Chinese *Macbeth*.

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<sup>103</sup> The actor performs in a semi-squat position throughout the performance.

## Visual Image

### Set and Lighting

The old records of Kunju's set design mostly focused on costumes; set and props were rarely involved. In the Daukuang (道光) Period of the Qing Dynasty, the small plays and 'fancy plays' were very popular. The so-called 'fancy play' was a performance full of lights, magic, images, and some apparatus, which made the stage dazzling, bizarre and motley, and full of visual pleasure. Therefore, it is seen as the source of the 'modern-set play.' However, it is all about the lighting effects, such as the dazzling 'fiery trees and silver flowers,' and skilful light settings. The setting on the stage still remained the traditional 'one-table-and-two-chairs' setting and adhered to past practices, which remained as the tradition throughout the Ming Dynasty and most of the Qing Dynasty.

During the Guanshu (光緒) period of the Qing Dynasty, realistic types of setting were employed, such as gardens, surrounding walls, pavilions, garden buildings, rockeries, trees, flowers, lakes, graves, tombstones and so on. Cloth-made cities, mountains, clouds, and all kinds of curtains as certain scenes started to be employed, made Kunju's stage different.



After the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established, there was a marked improvement in Kunju's setting by means of large-scale use of Chinese paintings as settings. In Shanghai's Kunju Theatre, for example, the setting in *Tsai Wenji* (蔡文姬)<sup>104</sup> uses the imitation of Chin/Han-style building to present a simple, deep, and unsophisticated characteristic as well as its style and feature. In *Tang Taizong* (唐太宗)<sup>105</sup> two huge painted curtains represented both the magnificent and refined elegance of a palace in the Tang Dynasty; in *The Peony Pavilion* two huge curtains and six pieces of different hardness are the basic modelling elements on the stage; In *Pan Jinlian* (潘金蓮)<sup>106</sup> the whole background is a copy of the illustration in Ming's novel *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水滸傳), and an image of a thread-bound book is built on both sides of the stage. In *The Bloody Hand* (血手記 – Kunju *Macbeth*)<sup>107</sup> the background is a big curtain in various shades of grey through black in order to represent the changes of scenes. The set design here adopts both realistic and lyrical images depending on plots and their differing needs.

The tradition of Kunju theatre is of a lyrical and imaginary atmosphere; thus, in the play there are no extra set or props, but black curtains and platforms. These are the typical set concepts in Kunju. Based on this artistic concept, Kunju *Macbeth* does not present a lavish palace on stage, but a simple, magnificent,

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<sup>104</sup> See Appendix 5.2.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> See Appendix 5.2.

and grand set style. Because each scene occurs at nightfall, Bo-an Gong, the set designer, adopts a huge, multi-levelled black curtain as the background on stage, and a big platform that could be separated into several small pieces in centre stage in order to present each meaningful scene. Thus, the simple set style and couple of necessary props not only maintain the basic one-table-and-two-chair Kunju form, but also set off the characteristic features in each scene.

According to Gong, the set design must follow Kunju's tradition although this play originates in the West. He says, 'The major principle in Chinese theatre is "performing," so we do not want it to be lessened or interfered with by a complicated stage image.'<sup>108</sup> Like Ninagawa, Gong starts from a Western piece and then turns it into a traditional one; therefore, the lyric tradition for him is something between concrete and abstract. From Gong's point of view, the Western concrete image will lessen the beauty of Kunju style, and cause conflict on stage. Thus, he prefers the image between concrete and abstract, in which the performance can be more flexible and the audience's imagination more inspired. He says, 'I had to consider what the audience expect about this play and what they want to see on stage.'<sup>109</sup>

Following the basic idea of Kunju theatre, *Kunju Macbeth* combines certain elements of Western theatre and somehow subverts Kunju tradition. For example, this play breaks through some forms of Chinese theatre – in order to

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<sup>108</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Bo-an Gong, Shanghai, 19 May 2004, see Appendix 6.4.

<sup>109</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Bo-an Gong, Shanghai, 19 May 2004, see Appendix 6.4.

create a spatial atmosphere, actors sometimes appear from up-centre stage as opposed to the traditional 'stage right on and stage left off.' Gong says in the interview:

I tried to create a 'deep stage image.' It is not concrete but a 'spatial feeling.' Through the lighting, light and shade, I tried to create a contrast between the stage set and lighting. I wanted to show people a combination of modern skill and traditional style.<sup>110</sup>

Besides, the use of gauze and platforms were common in the West but novel in traditional Chinese theatre. Since the costume is very complicated in traditional Chinese theatre, the traditional set is only a rug and a backdrop for the actors' convenience, and the props are only one table, two chairs, and other small props. In *Kunju Macbeth*, the traditional set is combined with some Western ideas, such as a platform and ramp, on which actors wearing heavy boots can perform easily. But the set and props are still kept as simple as possible for scenes of martial art.

Additionally, the old lighting in Kunju Theatre mainly used torches, oil lamps and candles. When performing in court officials' mansions, they used bright-angle lights and lanterns (with candles). After the port of Shanghai was developed, tea gardens, such as Sanya Garden, used gas lamps or air lamps. While performing the 'fancy play,' they needed thousands candles for lighting. After electric light was invented and introduced, light bulbs were used in the theatre and changed the illumination.

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<sup>110</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Bo-an Gong, Shanghai, 19 May 2004, see Appendix 6.4.

Until the 1980s, the function of lighting in Kunju performance was purely for illumination. After the 1980s the lighting was given an artistic role in performances. For example, there is a strong lyrical-characteristic backdrop in *The Peony Pavilion* which is designed and matched with colourful lightings, sometimes bright, sometimes soft, which create an exquisite, profuse, artistic image to the audience. The top curtain decorated with a canopy also left more space for lighting, so that the lighting changes could set off the scenes and plot.

Furthermore, because the main tone on the stage of Kunju *Macbeth* is black, the lighting area is lessened, and colours are hard to recognise, strong multi-level overheads and back lights are largely adopted. Also, the light arrangement was set in such a way that the wide lighting at the front and the reduced lighting at the back created a strong and deep perspective image to fill the simple set and props.

Consequently, since the stage is simple, the lighting is especially important to portray the whole atmosphere on stage. Together, the use of follow spotlights (on the basis of traditional white light) and sidelights as well as backlights create a vivid stage image. In the fifth scene, 'Requesting Witches,' there is no light on the actors' faces, but a strong backlight causing a surprising silhouette effect. Such lighting design also emphasises Ma Pai's powerlessness – he's at the end of his tether. According to Fang and Zhu, hundreds of lights perfectly follow the music and performance, and the stage set and fictitious images form a coherent entity. 'Lighting here not only reflects the scenes and creates the atmosphere,

but also sets off the character's inner life,' says Zhu.<sup>111</sup> In 'Assassination,' a couple of red beams shining on the stage centre black curtain imply murder. In 'Craziness', a blue light washes the whole stage and, embellished with a couple of red beams expose the character's fear and abnormal behaviour.

### **Costume and Make up**

The 'Costume case,' in which there are particular costumes, helmets and caps for Kunju, is the most important property of a Kunju troupe. Each character has its own strict costume (dress and accessories) in Kunju theatre, and that makes it different from other types of theatre. Because the costume case holds special prominence, there are regulations for Kunju troupes that explain that the costume case represents a troupe; without the costume case, the troupe does not exist. At the initial stage of the Republic of China, the Chuan-Fu Troupe in Shanghai lost its audience because of its shabby costumes; by contrast, Shin-Yue-Fu Troupe became prosperous because they acquired many brilliant costumes. During the Sino-Japanese War, Shen-Ni Troupe was dismissed because their costumes were all destroyed by Japanese heavy artillery.

Traditionally, Kunju performers must provide and manage their costume cases themselves. When they are in a poor financial situation, they may need to share

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<sup>111</sup> Zhu, 1998:211

certain costumes and fittings with different repertoires. After the PRC was established, the Shanghai Youth Kunju Troupe and the Shanghai Kunju Theatre founded a costume department, which specialized in costume design, production and management. Although each costume case has its own specialty, these have been expanded. In the new repertoires, particularly, they design appropriate costumes for each play, and each character has his/her own costume. Also, the management of the costume cases tends to be more diversified and institutionalized.

Although Kunju *Macbeth* combines both Kunju and Western styles, the way to form figures still follows the traditional costume. For example, the costume for Ma Pai imitates the makeup of *hong sheng* (紅生 – impersonates Kuan Yun-Chang, a famous General in Chinese history) but reduces the implication of its strong image. He wears a helmet, cape, and black beard to emphasise his identity as a duke. This costume also makes it easier for the audience to recognize his facial expression. Tie Shi (Lady Macbeth) costumed as *dan* (旦 – impersonated woman) wears a traditional hairstyle, a tight-waisted skirt, and long sleeves for dancing. General Du Ge costumed as *hua lien* (花臉 – impersonated man with strong personality) wears special facial make-up and the uniform of a General. Other characters also wear their own appropriate costumes and make-up.

However, there are some innovations in make-up. Differing from the traditional clown style, each witch has two masks, positive and negative (or genuine and sham), in order to create a treacherous atmosphere. As Tie Shi (Lady Macbeth) is sleepwalking and trying to wash her hands, her forehead is clearly seen to have bloodstains. The bloodstains here imply Lady Macbeth's brutality and evil, which is subversive to the traditional *dan* character.

Another fine example is the scene in which the General Du Ge appears as a phantom. He wears black gauze covering his face and a white beard embellished with a little red. The red beard here is an innovation in Kunju *lienpu*. The innovation comes from a discussion between director Chuan-jian Li (李家耀) and actor Yang Fang, who performs General Du Ge. According to Fang's recollections:

The director asked me then how I performed the cut on my face as in combat with my enemy. He also asked me if there was any possibility to unfold it on the beard. Therefore, I came up with a way to present the cut. I painted my face in white embellished with some red and purple lines as the cuts. Then I put wipes of red beard on my white one, which means the blood... Before I added any different stuff or tried to exaggerate something on the traditional *lienpu*, I had to make sure it would be convincing to the audience. And all of those innovations actually came from our life experiences.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, the director also asked Fang to perform 'Pulling faces' in the scene 'Disturbing Feast' when General Du Ge was killed and then appeared at Macbeth's feast. 'Pulling faces' is one of Chunaju's (川劇) performance skills, which could not be found in the original Kunju theatre. To perform it needs a

certain technique and materials, just like a magic trick. Fang then wore a mask fixed with his teeth, so Ma Pai saw the real General's face. All of a sudden Fang just turned around and quickly put on another mask hidden in his sleeve. When he turned facing Ma Pai, he showed another face.

All in all, the exploration above shows that *Kunju Macbeth* employs not only its traditional manner, but also some Western theatre techniques, and then presents its unique visual image. The following section will discuss the music – a vital part of Kunju – and see how the music arrangers/composers of the *Kunju Macbeth* achieved their intention to adapt this Western masterpiece as an intercultural product of the mixture of 'Chinese,' 'Kunju,' and 'Shakespeare.'

## Music

Music is an essential element in traditional Chinese theatre. Unlike Peking Opera, which is based on rhythms and singing styles, Kunju is framed in melodic and lyric tunes, and is more flexible. The Pihuang style in Peking Opera is particular about rhythms; however, Kunju is like a sort of lyric, which is very melodic and flexible. Peking Opera's structure of lyrics is more carefully and neatly done as well as following the standard, but Kunju is free of structure. Although the music of *Kunju Macbeth* is composed on the basis of traditional melodic and lyric tunes, it follows the plot and presents a new type.

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<sup>112</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Yang Fang, Shanghai, 21 May 2004, see Appendix 6.3.



When Li-chen Shen, the music arranger/composer, faced this play originating in a foreign masterpiece, she tried to overcome two problems. The first one was the complications of emotional changes. For example, Ma Pai's mental activity is very complicated when he is murdering Zheng Wang, so that one single tune is not able to express his emotions. In addition, Kunju is generally elegant and soft, especially Southern Kunju, so it is difficult to present such a heroic posture without breaking the traditional usage of tunes. Thus, Li-chen Shen decides to apply tunes in series, which contain various tunes altogether, and strongly express all the changes of Ma Pai's complications.

The music innovation is seen in three tunes, which are 'Ji Shan Bin' (集賢賓) in Shang mode (商調), 'Sho yo le,' (逍遙樂) and 'Shang jin ma' (上京馬) at the scene of 'Imputing'. This scene is all about Ma Pai's emotions before he usurps the throne. These three tunes reflect his being fierce of mien, but faint of heart. In the introduction, a creepy atmosphere is created. Ma Pai draws his sword but is upset because of his guilty conscience. With tough emotion, he sings the first line '*Seeing the dragon* (symbol of throne), *my heartbeats suddenly rise*.' The music on '*suddenly rise*' goes from the low register to high register. The timbre in the low-pitched register is vigorous and firm, and it even reaches the low-Western range that Kunju never had, to express Ma Pai's fear. According to Zheng-hua Ji, the music arranger/composer boldly applied the low-Western register that had never been used in Kunju, to present complicated emotions, but then on the word '*rise*' the tune suddenly leaps a tenth higher to express Ma

Pai's outrageous arrogance. In the first line in *rubato* (散板— free movement), there is a huge contrast in melody and dynamics that makes complicated mental activities interweave to create a certain image. Then the following singing style contains three gradations.<sup>113</sup>

Moreover, the first gradation, '*why is my heart so restless, ...*' sung with a reticent emotion, expresses Ma Pai's disorientation and hesitation. The second gradation is a cadenza-like passage. Ma Pai sees a vision in which '*the dragon sword is making huge noises, and the cold reflection is shining on the bloody knife edge...*' Here, the word '*bloody*' reaches the highest note in the whole play. It is emphasised and exaggerated in the highest register, with the loudest dynamics, and prolongation, sung with *vibrato*. Moreover, it is sung in between solid and soft voices to express his restlessness and fear. When the music goes to 4/4 time, Ma Pai has passed his restless emotion and has become poised. The third gradation, '*an auspice clearly shows a lucky omen, indistinctly I found the path God-gifted Dragon directed...*' is sonorous *allegro* in Metronome of 120. Following the music to the end, the conspiracy of the murder is fully brewed, and the emotion turns spirited and excited. The whole passage is full of cadenza-like brilliance.

The second problem for the composer to overcome was that of rhythm. As artistic director, Zuo-lin Huang argues that rhythm is the major problem in performing Kunju because it is minute and complicated. Kunju is written and

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<sup>113</sup> See Appendix 4.

composed in an ornate style by literati, so it also receives credit as high literature. But the problem is that one single word could be sung in a whole passage for the sake of elegance and then people do not remember what the word was by the end of the passage. Music arranger Shen says in the interview with the present researcher:

My idea about the music is to depict Macbeth's mentality; thus, I boldly change the singing style based on the plot and characters... I cut all the unnecessary prolonging passages if that will be easier to portray the characters. Besides, I composed some transitions and interludes in some passages that need strong and exaggerated emotions. I think it will be risky for actors to sing such a tough passage without any break. Those transitions can lessen the agitated emotions and bring up a contrast... I also composed a theme tune to express the heroic spirit, heavy and mystic emotions. Because there are ghosts and witches in this play, I applied augmented triad and created a little Western atmosphere.<sup>114</sup>

Shen thinks that the performing style is traditional, so the music structure should be changed to depict different atmospheres in the play. However, 'you need to be very careful – if you go too far, the style will be totally different.'<sup>115</sup> When she tries to depict the three witches, she uses an augmented triad because it is mysterious and bizarre in sound. In fact, this thesis would suggest that if the composer used sounds from traditional Kunju music, the audience would let their attention wander. But composing the triad within the music can easily catch people's attention, because it is special and bizarre. Then, three witches in dwarf action appear on stage; this seems to be Western, but fresh to the

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<sup>114</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Li-chen Shen, Shanghai, 20 May 2004, see Appendix 6.7.

<sup>115</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Li-chen Shen, Shanghai, 20 May 2004, see Appendix 6.7.

audience. Accordingly, Shen also uses some new rhythm and sound for the ghosts' appearances.

Furthermore, Shen boldly applies Chinese reed pipes and Western bass drum together in order to create a totally different acoustical experience. Because of her ideas, the audience is attentive when they see the three witches appear.

All in all, through observation, Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju's intercultural productions result from different social and cultural contexts, which represent their own unique interpretations of *Macbeth*. How did these two versions interact with festival critics' different expectations in Britain? This thesis examines, as one of the hypotheses of this research, the influence of the ideologies of Orientalism and Western Interculturalism on the festival critics' response towards the two *Macbeth* productions. At the same time, this research will establish whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted in the realm of intercultural theatre practice. In other words, previously there were insufficient productions to be able to analyse inherent prejudices. With more Eastern productions available to review, in Frank Dunlop's tenure, cultural prejudices (i.e. Orientalism and Western Interculturalism) become easier to identify and therefore challenge. Consequently, whether or not the EIF's programme truly represents cultural diversity in relation to intercultural transformation remains to be seen. These questions will be analysed in the following chapter.

## Chapter 5: Theoretical Analysis

To conclude the previous investigations set out above, this chapter will answer the question of whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre as practiced by Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju. In doing so, this chapter will offer an in-depth analysis of whether or not the Edinburgh International Festival truly carries out its mission to present as wide as possible a cultural background to its audience.

The first subsection is titled *EIF: Edinburgh's Window on the World*. The definition of 'foreign' in Chapter 5.1 means non-European or North American. Furthermore, this chapter also discusses if East meets West in the two *Macbeths* and whether or not the reception in Edinburgh varied when these two companies translated Shakespeare into two distinct Eastern traditions with varying degrees of alteration of those traditions, in the second and third subsections. Finally, the next chapter, as a conclusion, summarises this study and gives ideas for further development.

### 5.1 EIF: Edinburgh's Window on the World

Edinburgh International Festival has an excellent reputation and influence in the realm of world cultural exchange. According to its Mission Statement, reflecting international culture in presentation to Scottish audiences is one of the tasks it should fulfil. In order to examine whether or not EIF's programme truly represents cultural diversity in light of its mission, the analysis of the programme

is divided into two stages. The first stage is to identify the reality of the presence of foreign companies<sup>116</sup> on the EIF stage within three major categories of music<sup>117</sup>, drama and dance. The second stage analyses the companies from each continent, and emphasises the discussion of the foreign companies from non-European and North American continents.

In the first stage, it is clear that companies from some countries were more favoured by EIF Directors. The facts are shown in the tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and will be illustrated in each category.

### ***Music Programme***

**Table 5.1 EIF Programme Analysis – Musical**

Country	The Presence of Year	Total No. of Years
Australia	1974, 1984	2
Austria	1947, 1953, 1967, 1956, 1958, 1974, 1978, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999	12
Canada	1966, 1986, 1993	3
China	1979, 1987 <sup>118</sup>	2
Czech Republic	1964, 1969, 1970, 1983, 1990, 1997	6
Denmark	1954, 1958, 1989, 1990, 1992	5
Finland	1987, 1995	2
France	1947, 1950, 1964, 1975, 1985, 1989	6
Germany	1949, 1952, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1968,	31

<sup>116</sup> The companies were organised by their country of origin.

<sup>117</sup> Because the time for this research is limited, this research on the music programme focused on operas, orchestra and chamber concerts without taking the recitals into account.

<sup>118</sup> *The Peony Pavilion* was classified in the category of opera by EIF.

	1970, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000	
Hungary	1963, 1973, 1983, 1997, 2000	5
India	1963, 1965	2
Israel	1975	1
Italy	1948, 1950, 1953, 1957, 1963, 1966, 1969, 1972, 1982, 1987, 1988	11
Japan	1988, 1989, 1990	3
Netherlands	1955, 1957, 1965, 1967, 1970, 1977, 1983, 1990, 1992, 1997, 1999	11
Norway	1986, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997	6
Poland	1962, 1972, 1981, 1985	4
Russia <sup>119</sup>	1966, 1968, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997	13
Slovakia	1990	1
Spain	1958, 1989, 1993	3
Sweden	1959, 1970, 1974, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989	7
Switzerland	1960, 1962, 1978, 1981, 1995	5
USA	1951, 1955, 1956, 1964, 1967, 1975, 1978, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1994, 1996, 2000	15
Yugoslavia	1962	1

Up to the year 2000, as table 5.1 shows, most of the foreign companies in the music programme were from Germany, the United States, and Austria. After the Iron Curtain collapsed in 1990, the companies from the former Soviet Union became regulars in the Festival, even becoming more popular visitors than those from Germany, United States and Austria. Known as an operatic nation, Italy was one of the favourite guests for the Festival Directors. However, it was

<sup>119</sup> Includes USSR state orchestra.

soon on the decline after 1988.

In addition, companies from northern Europe such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland had been presenting their works at EIF frequently. Not to mention that companies from France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland all seemed attractive to the Festival Directors.

As to the international programme, until 2000 the only one from the Middle East was an Israeli company called Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Few companies from former British colonies appeared in the music programme, except for India and Australia which both merely showed up twice in total.<sup>120</sup> With the music of so-called 'exotic melodies' to Westerners, the Far East was not even introduced to Edinburgh until 1979, and their works were only presented on the stage five times after their first attendance, by companies from Japan and China.

### ***Drama Programme***

**Table 5.2 EIF Programme Analysis – Drama**

Country	The Presence of Year	Total No. of Years
Australia	1990	2
Austria	1993, 1997, 1998	3
Bulgaria	1969	1
Belgium	1972	1
Canada	1980, 1988, 1996	3
China	1986, 1987, 1997	3

<sup>120</sup> Not including the US in this description.



Czech Republic	1969, 1984, 1991	3
Denmark	1990	1
France	1947, 1948, 1951, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1960, 1970, 1979, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1995	20
Georgia	1987	1
Germany	1949, 1977, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2000	11
Greece	1966, 1981	2
India	1990, 1997	2
Ireland	1968, 1974, 1987, 1989, 1994, 1995, 1999, 2000	8
Israel	1983, 1987	2
Italy	1956, 1965, 1972, 1975, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1988, 1996	9
Japan	1972, 1976, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991	9
Korea	1990	1
Netherlands	1998, 1999	2
New Guinea	1987	1
New Zealand	1990	1
Poland	1966, 1968, 1989, 1991, 1999	5
Rumania	1971, 1981, 1991, 1992	4
Russia <sup>121</sup>	1966, 1978, 1979, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1991	7
Serbia	1991	1
South Africa	1975, 1985, 1986, 1988	4
Spain	1983, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1997, 1998	6
Sweden	1967, 1974, 1986, 2000	4
Switzerland	1974, 1998	2
USA	1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1998, 2000	14

Compared to the music programme, the proportion of foreign drama

<sup>121</sup> Includes USSR period.

programmes at the EIF was not so slight. The number of companies from France rank the country as among the most regularly-appearing since 1947, and those from the United States and Germany are in second and third place. If summarized by nations, these three countries represent over one third of the total performing programmes. Other European countries such as Italy, Sweden, Ireland, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Denmark, Austria, the Netherlands, and Greece took over one fifth of the performing programmes. Amongst these, The Abbey Theatre from Ireland was frequently invited to EIF programme – in 1968, 1974, 1994, 1995, 1999, and 2000. There were no foreign drama programmes at all in the years 1959 and 1973.

Since 1980, companies from Canada have been invited. However, invited companies from the former Soviet Union countries represent not even one seventh of the total of the EIF; companies from China, Japan, and Korea are the only ones from the Far East showing up on the celebrated EIF stages. The companies from Israel were the only ones from the Middle East, invited in 1983 and 1987. As for most others – from the former British colonies such as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and New Guinea – they only appeared in Edinburgh during Frank Dunlop's regime.

***Dance programme*****Table 5.3 EIF Programme Analysis – Dance**

Country	The Presence of Year	Total No. of years
Australia	1997	1
Belgium	1962, 1999	2
Canada	1991, 1994	2
China	1987	1
Cuba	1979, 1991	2
Denmark	1955, 1971	2
Finland	1959, 1987	2
France	1949, 1950, 1952, 1957, 1957, 1959, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1999, 2000	14
Germany	1963, 1976, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1978, 1992, 1995, 2000	9
Guinea	1964	1
Hungary	1963, 1973, 1983	3
India	1956, 1974, 1980	3
Italy	1988	1
Japan	1955, 1982, 1984, 1988, 1996	6
Korea	1990	1
Netherlands	1970, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000	6
Poland	1986, 1991	2
Russia	1987, 1997	2
Senegal	1972	1
Spain	1953, 1960, 1982, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1998, 1999	8
Sweden	1957, 1999	2
Thailand	1984	1
USA	1950, 1952, 1953, 1959, 1963, 1966, 1967, 1975, 1976, 1979, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998,	24

	1999, 2000	
Yugoslavia	1951, 1962	2

The Dance Programme in the Festival had been neglected for a long time, and was even cancelled in 1965 and 1969. Over fifty-four years, the United States has become the most important provider in EIF's Dance Programme. For example, the Mark Morris Dance Group was invited to EIF for five years in a row from 1992 to 1996, and New York City Ballet has also been invited to the EIF frequently. From the Continent, dance companies from France, the Netherlands and Germany took over one third of the performing programmes in total. Among them, the Netherlands Dance Theatre attended four times within five years (from 1996-2000), and Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Qupperta from Germany was invited to Edinburgh three times. Companies from other European countries such as Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Belgium and Italy were all guests of the EIF.

Companies from the former Soviet Union countries such as Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland and Russia took part in the official programme. As with the programme of music and drama, the companies from the Pacific region such as Japan, China, Korea, and Australia were also on the list. Indian companies brought South Asian culture into the Festival. Also, in 1964 and 1972 the companies from Guinea and Senegal were the only two from Africa that attended EIF's fifty-four-year dance programme before 2000. As Frank Dunlop expanded his horizons on the diversity of culture, another surprising

achievement was a dance company from Thailand appearing in 1984.

Based on the analysis above, the second stage will look into more specific realms of the countries by the location of continent in order to clarify whether the programme strategy at EIF has been European- and North American-oriented. By the location of continent, apart from South America, five major continents were involved in the EIF programme. However, the proportion of companies from each continent was far from equal. Table 5.4 shows the data.

**Table 5.4 EIF Programme Analysis by Continent**

Continent	Countries	No. of years in music programme	No. of years in drama programme	No. of years in dance programme
Europe	Austria	12	3	
	Bulgaria		1	
	Belgium		1	2
	Czech Republic	6	3	
	Denmark	5	1	2
	Finland	2		2
	France	6	20	14
	Georgia		1	
	Germany	31	11	9
	Greece		2	

	Hungary	5		3
	Ireland		8	
	Italy	11	9	1
	Netherlands	11	2	6
	Norway	6		
	Poland	4	5	2
	Rumania		4	
	Russia <sup>122</sup>	13	7	2
	Spain	3	6	8
	Sweden	7	4	2
	Switzerland	5	2	
	Serbia		1	
	Slovakia	1		
	Yugoslavia	1		2
North America	USA	15	14	24
	Canada	3	3	2
	Cuba			2
Asia	China	2	3	1
	Japan	3	9	5

<sup>122</sup> Includes the USSR era, such as the USSR state orchestra.

	India	2	2	3
	Israel	1	2	
	Korea		1	1
	Thailand			1
Africa	Guinea			1
	South Africa		4	
	Senegal			1
Oceania 123	Australia	2	1	1
	New Guinea		1	
	New Zealand		1	

This table shows there were companies from twenty-three countries from Europe which participated in EIF's programme. By contrast, there were only three countries from Africa and three from Oceania invited by the Festival Society. Asia had presented its diverse cultures in front of Edinburgh audiences from six varied countries. Although there were only three countries from North America receiving an invitation from the Festival, they did show very strong representation, especially by the USA. The analysis in the second stage will also be divided into the sections of music, drama and dance, as done in the first stage above. The next paragraphs will reveal the result of this analysis.

In their mission of presenting the international standard programme, the Festival Directors seemed unconvinced by the quality of non-Western music – and this very much included Frank Dunlop. To analyse the musical programme in depth over its history until 2000, there were only ten years when companies from non-European and American continents were involved in EIF's programme. Lord Harewood seemed to be an Indian culture enthusiast; in the short span of his 5-year tenure, he twice programmed Indian presentations, in 1963 and 1965. In the year of 1963, the presentation involved a series of performances with illustrated talks and discussions on the subject of Indian music and dance. Following in 1965, a series of performances were presented to introduce both North and South Indian music to Western audiences.

Peter Diamand introduced two companies from Oceania and Asia, one in each of his two years. In 1974, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from Australia was brought to Edinburgh, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra was also introduced in 1975. Diamand's successor, John Drummond, only brought one company from China and the performance was an ensemble of Chinese instrumentalists performing classic and modern Chinese music. By the time of Frank Dunlop, a major revolutionist in EIF, more musical groups were being imported from outside of Europe and America. Aside from 1985 and 1986, he brought companies from four countries, such as the Australia Youth Orchestra in 1984, and *The Peony Pavilion* by Shanghai Kunju Theatre from China in 1987.

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<sup>123</sup> Oceania is sometimes called Australasia.



In the following three years, East-Asian companies were all from Japan: Yonin No Kai (a group of musicians performing classical Japanese music) in 1988; Tokyo Quartet in 1989; and Saito Kinen Orchestra in 1990.

Unlike the musical programme, some of the Festival Directors seemed to have more respect towards cultural diversity in drama presentation. Apart from Yukio Ninagawa's *Macbeth*, *Medea*, and *The Tempest*; Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeth*; and Indian Kathakali Theatre's *King Lear*, most of the companies from non-Western regions were presenting their own culture at EIF. However, all the foreign theatre companies from the continents of Asia, Africa and Oceania were missing until Peter Diamand's regime. This evidence could indicate, as this thesis would suggest, that before Peter Diamand the so-called 'foreign' performance in the Directors' concept excluded the rest of the world.

Of course, there might be practical restrictions, such as budget, for the Directors' choices of shortage of foreign performance. Based on the analysis above, however, this research would argue that only the companies from Europe and North America have been retained. The first theatre company's appearance from non-European and North American continents was Japan's Hosho Noh Theatre in 1972, which was already twenty-six years after the establishment of the EIF in 1947. After that, Peter Diamand brought productions from South Africa in 1975, and Japan's Bunraku by the National Puppet Theatre of Japan in 1976. Ironically, during Peter Diamand's thirteen years of 'international'

programming, these companies were the only 'foreign' companies in terms of continental difference. Moreover, South Africa was a former British colony which had inherited European civilization, so the only truly 'Other' theatre culture that was presented in this mega-cultural event was from Japan.

Following Peter Diamand, John Drummond introduced an Israeli theatre company named Haifa Municipal Theatre in 1983. This was the only time in which Drummond programmed a production from outside Europe and North America. When Frank Dunlop received the power to create the programme in 1984 with the establishment of the World Theatre Season, the drama programme at EIF achieved real diversity. Therefore, based on the evidence shown in the tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, Japan seemed an ideal example for Dunlop to develop his innovation; companies from Japan presented works every year between 1985 and 1991.

Apart from the works from the renowned Yukio Ninagawa, Takeda Marionette Theatre, Yumi No Yuminsha Company, Yokohama Boat Theatre, Chijnkai Theatre Company as well as Stomu Yamash'Ta, were companies showing Western audiences their distinctive theatrical concepts. Other companies invited from Asia were the Chinese Magical Circus in 1986; *Women Warrior* and *Kunju Macbeth* by Shanghai Kunju Theatre in 1987. Cameri Theatre from Israel also presented its works in 1987; the Korean National Theatre and Dance Company and India's Kathakali Theatre performed in 1990. The companies from South Africa were: Baxter Theatre Company in 1985 and 1988 and the Market Theatre

Company in 1986. Furthermore, throughout EIF's history, theatre companies from Oceania did not present their works until Dunlop's dynasty, such as Raun Raun Theatre from New Guinea in 1987, Belvoir Street Theatre Company from Australia and Downstage Theatre Company from New Zealand in 1990.

When Brian McMaster made a sharp turn and rapidly shifted the programming policy far away from Dunlop's idea - a change that lasted through 2000 - there was only one performance from Asia: *East Palace, West Palace* from China, in 1997. Another company presented *A Tainted Dawn* – the Indian subcontinent's Partition Performances was created by the London-based Asian theatre company, Tamasha Theatre Company, in the same year.

In addition, the first non-European and North American dance performance, by the Azuma Kabuki Dancers and Musicians, was introduced to Edinburgh as early as 1955 for Ian Hunter's, the second Festival Director, last Festival. Hunter's successor, Robert Ponsonby, also brought an Indian dance company in 1956, Ram Gopal Indian Ballet. With Lord Harewood being lukewarm about the dance programme, there was only one non-Western dance company to present their work, from the National Company of Guinea. Under fifth Director Peter Diamand's thirteen-year tenure, between 1966 and 1978, there were only two non-Western dance groups which received invitations from the Festival Society. The first one was the Ensemble National du Sénégal from Africa in 1972; this was also the only single dance performance in that year's programme. The

second one was Kathakali Dance Group from India in 1974 and their performance was one of two companies in that year's dance programme.

Following John Drummond's five-year regime, there were two dance companies from non-Western regions. The first one, called Ritha Devi Company, from India in 1980, presented Indian-flavoured dance pieces. The second one, Sankai Juku (山海塾) came from Japan in 1982; this Japanese company is renowned for its Butoh (舞踏カンパニー) performance, which is full of Japanese spiritualism and concentrates on inner movement. During the 1980s, SanKai Juku remained in Europe and performed in various international festivals – Edinburgh International Festival, Spain Madrid International Festival, International Cervantino Festival, etc. Based on financial restrictions at EIF along with SanKai Juku's artistic achievement, it is not surprising that this company was invited by Drummond and the company chose Edinburgh as a tour destination.

In contrast to previous directors' dance programming policies, the situation was changed to be the same as in the drama programme when Frank Dunlop took over. Japan was also one of the favourite sources for Dunlop, as is reflected in his drama selection. During his regime, Dunlop invited two contrasting Japanese dance companies to Edinburgh. The companies were Arifuku Kagura Troupe, which presented traditional Japanese masked dance in 1984, whereas the Matsuyama Ballet presented Western ballet in 1988. Dance companies from Thailand, China and Korea also made their brief appearances, respectively, as Royal Thai Classical Dancers and Musicians in 1984; Xi'an Singing and Dance

Company in 1987, and Korean Classical Music and Dance Company presented traditional music and dances in 1990.

Brian McMaster re-shaped the programme policy to promote only so-called 'high' arts, as mentioned in Chapter 2. As the result of this, few non-European and North American dance companies received a space in McMaster's programme. Until 2000, there were only two companies from Asia and Oceania. Tomoe Shizune and Hakutobo presented Japanese Butoh in 1996 and Bangarra Dance Company came from Australia in 1997.

Although there was representation by companies from Asia, Africa and Oceania and those mainly from Japan, China, India, South Africa and Australia, it is apparent that there is a strong feature within EIF's programming policy which needs to be challenged. Based on the evidence explored in Chapter 2, the programming policy for each Director was driven by political and financial concerns as well as personal knowledge and taste. However, the latter is, as this thesis suggests, the major force in the programming direction. Since most Directors have expertise in the field of Western music, the reality in the musical programme is that most foreign companies presented as their music works mainly based on Western music.

Apart from Australia (a member of the British Commonwealth), this tendency towards so-called mainstream classics even included Tokyo Quartet (1989) and Saito Kinen Orchestra (1990) who performed Beethoven, Haydn and Brahms. Ironically, most of the non-Western companies that performed Western classical

music were programmed by Frank Dunlop. Moreover, only the Indian companies in 1963 and 1965 and the ensemble of Chinese instrumentalists and Shanghai Kunju Theatre's *The Peony Pavilion* in 1979 and 1987, as well as Japanese Yonin No Kai in 1988 were truly representing a diverse cultural background within EIF's musical programme.

This finding also indicates the reality of the domination of the Western classic musical form in the world musical field. This domination has become a sort of cultural Imperialism, which has been discussed in Chapter 3, and has even influenced the people in China and Taiwan, who appreciate Western music but dishonour their own musical heritage.

By means of Ian Hunter and Peter Diamand's efforts, Edinburgh's audiences had an opportunity to encounter Japanese national treasures – Noh, Kabuki and Bunraku. In addition, as a theatre director with his preference and willingness to take a risk, Frank Dunlop also brought many companies from countries outside the continents of Europe and America for their first appearance on the Festival stages. In the drama programme for instance, there were: from Oceania, Raun Raun Theatre from New Guinea; Belvoir Street Theatre Company from Australia and Downstage Theatre Company from New Zealand. Furthermore, the Chinese Magical Circus and Shanghai Kunju Theatre, Israeli Cameri Theatre as well as the Korean National Theatre and Dance Company were all from Asia.

Dunlop also introduced wide-ranging dance forms to the Festival audience by bringing the Royal Thai Classical Dancers and Musicians; Xi'an Singing and

Dance Company from China, and Korean Classical Music and Dance. Those dance presentations combined both physical movement and musical delivery, and their inclusion can be seen as the result of Frank Dunlop's preference in line with his idea of innovation, as he explained in the Usher Hall in 1985.<sup>124</sup> Even though Dunlop attempted to achieve the mission of reflecting 'international' culture by bringing theatre and dance companies from diverse cultural contexts, this effort was changed by the following Director's different preferences when Brian McMaster took over the leadership.

Until the year of 2000, with his musical background, Brian McMaster had never selected any single company outside of Europe and America for his musical programme. McMaster's Eurocentric ideology was reflected not only in the musical programme but also in the drama and dance sections. The Festival Society might argue that McMaster did programme performances from China, Japan and Australia. Indeed, there is no doubt that the Festival did have such a programme; however, when we look into those productions, we can still find some clues showing McMaster's Eurocentric ideology. Apart from the pure Japanese Butoh, *East Palace*, *West Palace*, the other productions were heavily influenced by Western culture; even the Chinese production was a contemporary Western style performance – in the manner Western Realism.

Besides, the Bangarra Dance Company from Australia in 1997 was still a Western contemporary dance presentation. Furthermore, the only performance

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<sup>124</sup> This example was mentioned in chapter 2.

from the Indian subcontinent, Partition Performances, was created by a London-based Asian theatre company. With the shortage of diverse culture on his programme, Brian McMaster programmed productions from Ireland's Abbey Theatre four times between 1992 and 2000. Likewise, he selected performances by Netherlands Dance Theatre four times within five years between 1996 and 2000.

Indeed, there were other concerns impacting the argument of EIF's Occidental-emphasis programme. Apart from the criteria of quality, political influence and personal expertise and preference, based on previous exploration of the issue of programming policy at EIF, financial considerations should be stressed further. According to Clive Barker in *The Possibilities and Politics of Intercultural Penetration and Exchange* (1991):

Undoubtedly a major factor affecting the viability of festivals and foreign tours as a possible area of cultural interpenetration and exchange has been the rising costs against diminishing returns which lead promoters to maximize receipts over a minimal period of stay. Productions fly into festivals and out again as soon as possible, and tours reduce further and further towards a series of single performances in a string of venues. (Pavis, 1996: 250)

Barker also criticises the lukewarm attitude towards cultural funding by British authorities, saying: 'British policy towards theatrical exchange now seems best expressed as, 'If anyone wants British companies to tour, they must pay and if any foreign companies want to tour Britain, they must pay.'<sup>125</sup> Here, Barker's statement when aligned with the Directors' experience, mentioned in Chapter 2,

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<sup>125</sup> Pavis, 1996: 250



indicates that the consideration of EIF's programming policy is also hugely driven by financial concerns, especially in the musical plans.

For example, with the rise of airfares and other transportation costs, it is difficult for a festival to pay for an orchestra with hundreds of musicians and performers from the Far East without any foreign sponsorship or cooperation such as foreign governmental funding and further touring arrangements to share the costs. This suggestion was confirmed by the appearance of Shanghai Kunju Theatre in 1987. The Company's European touring schedule was organised by Cardiff Laboratory Theatre Company with the help of both the official and private sectors.<sup>126</sup> This suggestion is also backed by the reality of the lack of any dance programme in 1967. Indeed, financial concerns have always limited the Directors' programming strategy. But this limitation cannot be an excuse for excluding the various cultural presentations across geographical distance or even for the Directors' ideological obstruction.

Undoubtedly, the fundamental element to create an influential and successful international 'high' arts festival should still, as this thesis would suggest, be rooted in its native culture and artists as the foundation of its distinctive character; then embrace the diverse cultures from the rest of world as a whole. Edinburgh International Festival, as a leading Scottish international cultural

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<sup>126</sup> The Visiting Arts Unit of Great Britain & Northern Ireland; The British Council in Cardiff, London, Shanghai, Peking; The Embassy of the People's Republic of China; The Welsh Arts Council; The Great Britain-China Centre; The Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding; The Wales-China Friendship Association; The Scottish-China Friendship Association; The Sino British Trade Council and Musée Kwok On, Paris.

platform, has established its worldwide reputation for presenting international productions, as well as trying to involve more and more Scottish works to form its unique profile. Again, McMaster once mentioned that he has to make distinctive choices to keep people coming to the festival.<sup>127</sup> However, the emphasis only on Western heritage and just pretending that Western classics adequately represent 'international' traditions within the Director's programming policy can also be criticised for not fulfilling the mission of cultural diversity,.

In fact, aside from Frank Dunlop's regime, if looking through the analysis above, then the description by Femi Folorunso is worth mentioning again here, that 'Those who do, tend to see diversity as closely bound with a wider European and North American representation of culture.'<sup>128</sup> Accordingly, this thesis would suggest that this is exactly the same as EIF Directors' concept of 'international culture.'

Despite the fact that there are some significant companies in the continent of South America, such as Theatre of the Oppressed by Augusto Boal in Brazil, over its history, the Festival Directors have not programmed any single company from this continent. According to the EIF's programming considerations mentioned in Chapter 2, the political and financial concerns could not be an excuse for the lack of Latin America's representation. From a political viewpoint, apart from the Falklands War in 1982, there was no major political conflict

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<sup>127</sup> The Scotsman, 6 August, 2005, p.12

<sup>128</sup> Folorunso F., *Cultural Diversity Strategy*, 2002:11,

between the South American region and Britain. In other words, the political climate between EIF and Latin American countries until the year of 2000 was quite smooth, so there is no reason for the Festival Directors not to have invited companies from this region.

From the perspective of financial considerations, since companies from countries of the Southern Hemisphere have been invited to Edinburgh, such as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, then there is no reason for EIF not to bring companies from South America over to Edinburgh. Even if the production costs were unaffordable; the Festival Directors could still look for organisations to share the costs, as Frank Dunlop did.

After eliminating the considerations analysed above, there are still three possibilities remaining, 'quality,' the 'gossip network,' and 'personal knowledge and preference.' The judgement upon 'quality' is very subjective. In fact, 'quality' can be built up by critics' approvals, individual taste, as well as marketing strategy. Since the programming strategy at EIF is driven mainly by each Director, the criteria for quality are even more ambiguous. In the case of the lack of Latin America's representation within EIF's fifty-four year programme, who can really argue that the performing arts in South America are not qualified to meet EIF need in terms of quality?

Moreover, as this research explored in Chapter 2, the 'gossip net work' is another consideration for the Directors when programming their unique Festival. It is hard to believe that there are not any impressive South American

performances that have been seen and circulated by word of mouth in the societies of arts in Scotland. If, as according to Brian McMaster, 'Programming is all educated guesswork'<sup>129</sup>, then this thesis would suggest that whether or not the gossip network is useful and employable all depends on the Directors' personal knowledge and preference.

Unlike John Drummond and Frank Dunlop who 'popularised' the festival – some critics might prefer the term 'fringerised' – their programme to meet audience needs and political demands, the rest of the Directors were focusing on so-called high arts, especially in the musical programme. All these decisions and results can be traced back to each Director's personal experience, knowledge and taste, as mentioned in Chapter 2. In the example of the deficiency of inclusion of South American performing groups in EIF's programme, this thesis would assume that the knowledge of Latin music and theatre are far behind the Directors' perception, and that the South Americanised Flamenco is incapable of competing with Western modern dance and classical ballet in the preference and catalogue of the Directors' 'high arts'. Again, this analysis very much confirms the argument raised previously in this chapter that the major consideration to drive EIF's programming strategy is the Directors' personal knowledge and preference.

From all the realities revealed above, the ideology of Eurocentricism dominated the EIF's programme, and it can also be suggested that this ideology is very

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<sup>129</sup> Lockerbie, 1994: 5

much connected to Orientalism and Western Interculturalism. As a renowned international platform for cultural exchange, that these Orientalist and Western intercultural preferences are deep within the EIF's programming strategy has become the major argument in this research. This phenomenon also explained the shortage of non-European or North American presentation over EIF's history until the year 2000.

Through analysis of its fifty-four year programme, this research discovered the essence of Orientalism and Western Interculturalism represented in EIF's Eurocentric programming policy. Based on all the evidence raised above, this thesis would suggest that within the Director's Eurocentric preference, non-European or North American performance is not only disqualified from meeting EIF's needs, but also is against the Director's personal expertise and taste.

Ironically, it was the British Empire which conducted the most powerful colonialism during the last few centuries; its settlements spread all over the world, not least in Asia and Africa. However, as one of the major public funding receivers, how can the EIF retain its strong European/ Western links in its programme without continuing damage to its 'international' reputation? One aspect of the programme policy needs addressing – in quality, whether or not only European and North American works represent high-standard performances. It is also necessary to consider whether or not the concept of 'international' from the Festival director's viewpoint should be an individual

issue, when a Director's knowledge and common sense represent the Westerner's point of view, as Said argues in his *Orientalism*.

This thesis might not offer all the answers to those questions. However, the question of whether or not the main programming policy within Frank Dunlop's tenure triggered British critics' oriental prejudice towards Eastern intercultural practices, and how the reality of Ninagawa's and Kunju's artistic identities interact with EIF's programming policy through their intercultural productions of *Macbeth* will be analysed in the next subsections. In order to discuss the implications of the Festival programming policy, criticisms and intercultural theatre practices of *Macbeth*, this thesis is analysing the essence of both Ninagawa's and Kunju's *Macbeth* beforehand.

## **5.2 Ninagawa Meets Kunju in *Macbeth***

As was discussed in Chapter 3, the phenomenon of intercultural theatre practice has always been a problematic issue which involves not only the concept of appropriation by the borrower, but also the resistant attitude on the part of the lender. This situation can be seen as a universal phenomenon, wherever the appropriator is located. Consequently, to analyse this contemporary theatrical form, some areas have to be covered, as Patrice Pavis described in *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996):

Even before speaking of cultural transfer, one must locate the foreign elements present and determine from what context these particles in suspension have been extracted. The identification is not automatic,

given our incomplete knowledge of these forms and the considerable distortions that they may have undergone. Whatever our distance from the culture to be reconstituted may be, a few traces of it can always be recovered, often metonymic and elliptic: a narrative mode, a dramatic structure, the presence of themes or metaphors, indexes on the reality of stereotypes, a 'structure of feeling' (Raymond Williams). (p.16)

Accordingly, this section mainly concentrates on how the performance texts of Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeth* were received by critics. These performance texts include two realms, one is the concept of presentation forms; the other is the performance techniques. Furthermore, the intangible ideology in association with the identity issue within these two intercultural theatre works will also be addressed.

In the light of the presentation form, this thesis has discovered the major difference between both *Macbeths* which confirms, as Francis King said in the *Sunday Telegraph*, 'If this Japanese company belongs very much to the West and the present, then the Shanghai Kunju Company belongs very much to the East and the past.'<sup>130</sup> Although 'this Japanese company' that King refers to might be Yumi No Yuminsha Company, this argument is still applicable to describe the difference between Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju Theatre's *Macbeths*. Through an archive investigation and study of both productions on video, which were explored in the last chapter, the primary divergence between those two performances is the form of presentation.

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<sup>130</sup> *Sunday Telegraph*, 30 August 1987, p.13

In the form of Japanese *Macbeth*, the realistic concepts in Western theatre were hugely employed by Yukio Ninagawa to establish his artistic achievement. By contrast, the principal intention for Shanghai Kunju Theatre to adapt this Western classic was to marry both Eastern and Western traditions and present this hybridisation in a Kunju manner. Afterwards, all the performance techniques were built on the essence of selected forms with varied appropriations and/ or material obtained from both foreign and native traditions. Since all the investigation on both *Macbeths* has been carried out in Chapter 4, this section will focus on the responses of critics towards those two productions.

Throughout centuries of development, the form of realism has occupied a significant position in Western theatre performance and has even expanded its influence into the realms of popular culture. The public in the West have come to enjoy productions that are more 'visual' and easily 'digested.' This argument is also supported by the results at the box office between commercial musical productions and general theatre works. Even though cultural exchange between continents was frequent in the 1980s as global economic forces were strong at that time, Chinese traditional theatre in general was still not very popular in the West, as it was costly to transport large numbers of performers.

Due to the shortage of presentations by Chinese theatre, the influence of Western Realism remained pervasive. Consequently, Western audiences have problems when they encounter Kunju – a traditional art form whose philosophy is totally alien to them. The problem is complicated by the fact that Kunju relies



heavily on symbolism and imagination. In fact, the difficulty in appreciating Kunju's performance not only affects the general public, but also some of the theatre 'experts' such as critics. This difficulty in appreciation sometimes results in the reality of cultural misunderstanding.

In the comparison of both productions of *Macbeth*, what was enjoyable or difficult for appreciation was obvious. This situation has also confirmed the argument raised above that a Western audience is in favour of familiar content, with even the title of products being somewhat similar. Paul Taylor of *The Independent* admired Ninagawa's *Macbeth* very much and called it a 'masterly' production. In his opinion, the show achieved 'greatness' because it 'never descends to the level of empty, grandiose spectacle.'<sup>131</sup> The Kunju version, however, seemed lacking in spectacle, and was simply 'empty.' As Fernau Hall of *The Daily Telegraph* observed, it was done 'in the Kunju manner, with costumes, on a nearly bare stage.'<sup>132</sup>

This thesis suggests that this is a case of cultural misunderstanding, and that this 'emptiness' and 'nearly-bare' Kunju stage is precisely what gives room for symbolism and imagination from the Chinese point of view. In fact, in a traditional Kunju performance, one exquisitely patterned backdrop, plus one table and two chairs, represents a whole fictional world for the actors and audience. As Marco Polo described in the *Il Milione*, there are enormous treasures, huge cities and magnificent palaces, and this image was engraved in

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<sup>131</sup> 19 September, 1987

<sup>132</sup> 27 August 1987, p.8

so-called Orientalism for Westerners to fantasize about what China looks like. Surely, this ancient image of China's character might be altered by the improvements of modern technology in which Westerners can really experience Chinese cultural heritage through travel or the media. However, this experience does not necessarily convey a true understanding of the essence of this culture. For instance, Jing Gong (龔靜) explained in *The Arts: About Emptiness* (藝術談：留白韻事) that the emphasis of emptiness within Chinese arts can be seen as an influence of Lao Tzu's (老子, around BC. 600) *Tao Te Ching* (道德經). For Lao Tzu, this emptiness represents everything by breaking all the limitations and boundaries, so the whole world is included. Since then, the spirit of emptiness has become the essence of Chinese art as represented by classical paintings, calligraphy, poetry, music, theatre as well as other arts.

In addition, the imagination in Kunju is also aroused by the use of simple props and formulaic movements. It is exactly as Milton Shulman describes, that the stage is relatively bare because in this type of theatre, a river or a boat has to be 'imagined' and a chair lying on its side actually denotes a mountain.<sup>133</sup> Educated Kunju audiences are familiar with these formulaic movements and are content to accept that the wielding of a horsewhip, for example, denotes horse riding. Even the martial art in Kunju's *Macbeth* is more abstract than Ninagawa *Macbeth*'s Kendo (Japanese sword fighting). Apart from the costumes, make-up and martial arts, these movements contribute to the Western impression that

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<sup>133</sup> *The London Evening Standard*, 27 October 1987

traditional Chinese theatre is abstract and conceptual, and not visually spectacular.

On the contrary, Ninagawa adopts a completely different approach in his adaptation of *Macbeth*, appealing to a Western audience's need for visual spectacle. He starts from the West, and then turns to the East, creating his own theatre language in the end. As he says in his interview with Anne Miyamoto-Timmins, 'People seem to think that the words of the play are the most important element in theatre, and that the scenery is just the background, something extra... But what do you have eyes for?'<sup>134</sup> To him, the visual aspect of theatre is just as important as the script. He firmly believes that this is the new language of theatre, where the words and visual elements enhance each other and have equal value. As a result of this mixture, a new type of theatre has been born. Miyamoto-Timmins calls his stunning visual theatricality a 'Ninagawa trademark.'<sup>135</sup> Moreover, Ninagawa does not stop at presenting a visually stunning spectacle. He uses it to break through language barriers, so that the main missing ingredient – the poetry of Shakespeare's original text – is hardly missed. 'Through the spectacle, something central and essential in *Macbeth's* dramatic life is unfolded.'<sup>136</sup>

This thesis suggests that Ninagawa's productions are easily appreciated by Western audiences, because Ninagawa has discovered a unique aesthetic

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<sup>134</sup> *Edinburgh: Festival Times Magazine*, 1991, pp.54-55

<sup>135</sup> *Edinburgh: Festival Times Magazine*, 1991, p.55

<sup>136</sup> Christopher Edwards, *The Spectator*, 26 September 1987, p.45

sensibility that is independent of languages or specific cultural contexts. His works speak to the audience even though they are confronted with images that are radically different from what they are used to. After seeing the rerun of *Macbeth* in the National Theatre, London in 1987, *The Guardian* reviewer Michael Billington states:

We are used to seeing *Macbeth* presented in stygian gloom; here he is surrounded by colour and light. But Ninagawa is not simply presenting us with great pictures. He has a version of the play based on the transience of earthly power... What makes this a great production, however, is that it combines regret at human madness and folly with awareness of earthly beauty. (19 September, 1987, p.12)

As this thesis mentioned before, both Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's versions of *Macbeth* are innovative in their own theatrical styles. That is the most important thing in this issue, even if the former experimentation is more 'successful' than the latter. Kunju *Macbeth* challenges traditional repertoires and adapts a Western script for a Chinese audience. And Ninagawa questions the essence of Japanese traditional theatre and Western Realism, marrying them to create his own theatrical language. Ninagawa's experiment has received a good response as Michael Billington observed: 'Ninagawa's productions marry ritual and realism, Kabuki and Stanislavski, patterned movement and psychology, the East and West, and "demolishes barriers we falsely erect" between the two geographical regions.'<sup>137</sup>

In addition, from both verbal and theatrical points, the first issue in presenting an

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<sup>137</sup> *The Guardian*, 26 September 1987, p.14

Eastern production to the West is language. Comparisons are accessible because these two companies chose the same play, Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. According to *The London Evening Standard* reviewer Shulman's opinion, 'without their poetry, Shakespeare's plays would be emaciated, shrivelled works of art.'<sup>138</sup> Certainly, according to Ninagawa, he has to deal with problems when he works in translation texts. Because of the possibility of reducing the original 'flavour' in terms of rhetoric in any sort of translation works, the major problem for him is how smoothly a translation work can be delivered as dramatic language.

Besides, for Ninagawa, the different social/cultural contexts between the foreign country (i.e. the origin of play) and the native country (i.e. the receiver or appropriator) also need to be challenged. Without the knowledge and understanding of myth and historical background, in Ninagawa's opinion, it would be very difficult for Japanese audiences to appreciate Shakespeare's works. This concern has absolutely confirmed Pavis' suggestion as mentioned before that one must understand and even appreciate the foreign elements within its original social and cultural context. As the result of this concern, apart from transforming *Macbeth* into the Japanese ancient world, Ninagawa also modified the original text to facilitate his audience, which will be addressed later on.

Indeed, there were also unflattering comments about the use of language in

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<sup>138</sup> 18 September, 1987

Ninagawa's *Macbeth*. Charles Osborne, for example, said in *The Daily Telegraph*, 'There is no beauty of sound in the Japanese language.'<sup>139</sup> Jack Tinker of *The Daily Mail*, however, gave an alternative view, 'Strangely... Shakespeare's language is the last thing you miss in this all-Japanese version.'<sup>140</sup> He also claimed in another article that Ninagawa's triumphant rendering of *Macbeth* 'speaks eloquently across any language barriers.'<sup>141</sup> *The Guardian* reviewer Michael Billington agrees, hailing Komari Kurihara's portrayal of Lady Macbeth 'as a performance that leaps over language barriers.'<sup>142</sup>

Ninagawa has his own philosophy regarding interaction with the audience, as he does not write notes for the programme. In his opinion, usually, the audience read the intention beforehand, and then the show starts, and they find out that nothing they read is presented on stage. To Ninagawa, he shows everything on stage, and he dismisses all the worry of whether his message can be received by the audience or not. Ninagawa thinks audiences are all different; how his work is received is none of his business. The way Ninagawa crosses language barriers, as Michael Billington observed above, is: 'To assure the rhetoric, I have to put the assuring visuals onto the voice of the actors during the performance time, without being noticed. That is how I communicate with [the] audience. This process is really subtle and secret.'<sup>143</sup>

In contrast, Shanghai Kunju, as this thesis suggests, did not effectively

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<sup>139</sup> 19 September, 1987, p.X

<sup>140</sup> 18 September, 1987

<sup>141</sup> *The Daily Mail*, 25 September, 1987

<sup>142</sup> 19 September 1987, p.14

communicate itself to a British audience. Robert Dawson Scott of *The Glasgow Herald* describes the presentation of the Kunju *Macbeth* as having a 'vocabulary of character and motive so alien, it is hard to follow,'<sup>144</sup> even though there were subtitles during the performance. Consequently, it can be suggested that the emphasis on this adaptation by Shanghai Kunju Theatre is primarily on the modification of the story in favour of Chinese audiences and the innovation of Kunju itself. Although it was an experiment for Kunju to reach the widest public as well as to explore further developments, Artistic Director Zuo-lin Huang made a comment after Kunju *Macbeth* was performed in the Shakespeare Festival in China in 1986:

To sum up, it has been my intention for dozens of years to perform Shakespeare in Kunju operatic style. I hope that, after our experiment, Shakespeare's plays can gain somewhat in expressiveness and vitality. Our experiment might well fail; nevertheless, it can offer others some experience. It will be beneficial too for Kunju, since Kunju faces the problems of how to carry on its own traditions, and how to discard the old and bring forth the new. (Li, 1994: 52-53)

Ruru Li, a Chinese scholar, also offered feedback on the shortage of Kunju's adaptations. As Li argues in *Blood-stained Hands: Macbeth in Kunju Form* (1994), 'the lack of sensitivity to perceive the difference between varied cultural inheritances is the major problem within this Kunju *Macbeth*. Li relates the script-writer Shi-feng Zheng's expressed idea about this adaptation: 'In making the Kunju version of *Macbeth*, it has been found that the similarities overshadow the

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<sup>143</sup> Ninagawa, 1993: 105-106

<sup>144</sup> 26 August, 1987, p.4

differences.' Then, Zheng's statement was criticised by Ruru Li as 'His (Zheng's) optimistic attitude might have led him to ignore some of the important elements of the original.' (pp.46-47) This 'optimistic attitude' is, as this thesis would argue, that confirmed with Pavis' statement that the 'distortion' of the original text occurred even as the adaptor tried to capture the 'themes or metaphors.'

Ironically, Ruru Li's opinion towards Shi-feng Zheng's attitude is recalled with the arguments made by Rustom Bharucha on the lack of sensitivity that some Western artists have shown to Eastern sources in the way of 'distortion'. 'Distortion' – the word has been employed to describe the intercultural theatre works created by Western artists. As this thesis mentioned in Chapter 3, Rustom Bharucha criticises Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* for appropriating the Indian epic without understanding the root and respecting the origin, a lack of understanding which distorted Indian heritage to meet a Western audience's needs. Other evidences in relation to this distortion by Western artists were also explored in Chapter 3, including *Madame Butterfly*, *The World of Suzie Wong*, *The Yellow Jacket* and *Lute Song*.

In the instance of *Madame Butterfly* and *The World of Suzie Wong*, both productions clearly represent the ideology of Orientalism in which the 'East' has to be dominated by the 'West'. Madam Butterfly and Suzie Wong are Eastern women who profoundly submit themselves to their Western masters, even though in the end they are still discarded by the men. Those plots demonstrate the fantasy of the image of Eastern women by Westerners at that time, i.e. that



Eastern women are obedient, gentle and loyal no matter what sort of treatment they have encountered. These plots also indicate that the women need to be dominated and protected, otherwise they would not survive.

Another ideology within Orientalism has been revealed in the productions of *The Yellow Jacket* and *Lute Song*, in which the East has to be represented in favour of Western needs. The distortion of *The Yellow Jacket* is that the Westerner always subjectively thought that the Eastern character was feminine. In order to meet the audience's demands, the playwright has to modify this story even though he does realise that reality has been distorted. The distortion in *Lute Song* was that the spirit of Chinese morality within the original text was eliminated; instead, Western Christian culture, in terms of the power of love, becomes the 'backbone' throughout the production for an audience's familiarity. Western audiences receive a false image of the Orient by the artists' conscious ignorance; the artists created more false images to meet the demand of the audience's taste. Consequently, as this thesis suggests, truth or falseness has become an illusion and this circumstance is how Orientalism was established and the reason that Western Interculturalism has been criticised.

Yukio Ninagawa, in contrast, offers his opposing opinion on this distortion, which this research has mentioned in Chapter 4. He suggests that the world is just like a collage and this 'stage/world' is also distorted. He prefers to create a work with this distortion to move the audience in a 'fresh' and 'beautiful' way. Ninagawa's distortion concept is accompanied with his respect to the original spirit, as mentioned previously; however, the lack of sensitivity of distortion towards

foreign sources among many Intercultural artists can also be criticised as a cultural misunderstanding.

This cultural misunderstanding, as this thesis would argue, takes place not only with the artists both from West and East, but also in the EIF's programming strategy as well as with British critics. Because of this misunderstanding, Eurocentric strategy becomes the priority concept within the Director's programming direction, in which the Directors practically ignore cultures from the rest of the world, in terms of the performing arts. Also because of this misunderstanding, most British critics could not appreciate Kunju *Macbeth* as an unfamiliar but legitimate form. Since this section is focusing on analysing Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeths*, this cultural misunderstanding of Kunju *Macbeth*, especially in terms of lighting performance, will be addressed later on in this section.

Returning to the argument on the script adaptation in Chinese version, it is not surprising how Li reached a conclusion similar to Alex Renton's mentioned in the Chapter 3 of this thesis, as 'full of Confucian inconsequentialities' and 'more in keeping with the vigorous symbolising of the Kunju style than are Shakespeare's subtleties.'<sup>145</sup>

Through interviews with the artists in Shanghai, the present researcher found those artists' appreciation of Shakespeare was particularly for the poetry within

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<sup>145</sup> *The Independent*, 28 August 1987, p.11

Shakespeare's works, as Kunju is also a poetic and lyric form. The second view is the context within *Macbeth* in which Chinese history has many similar examples for comparison. The last view expressed by the artists is that the ideology at the most flourishing era for Kunju was similar to what it was during Shakespeare's successful period. Furthermore, the greatest of Kunju's playwrights, Xian-zu Tang (湯顯祖 1550-1616) died in the same year as Shakespeare.

Most of the critics were unimpressed by this Chinese *Macbeth*, but there were some comments different from those by some journalists. Actors at Shanghai Kunju Theatre received good feedback from British audiences. According to Jing-xian Zhang (as Lady Macbeth):

Performing this play in the United Kingdom is even more effective than performing it in China because the British are very familiar with Shakespeare's works... we received a huge favourable response, ... they told us that they did not expect the Chinese could ever perfectly perform Shakespeare, but we did it! They thought we did a splendid job!.<sup>146</sup>

Yi-lung Liu (as the Royal Physician) echoes Zhang:

I think this play is attractive to the British. The audience are so intoxicated with our performance. The more excited they are, the harder we perform for them... I remember that there was an old lady with her wheelchair coming to our performance, and she even followed us wherever we went. She was so amazed how splendid it could be to play Shakespeare's work in a Chinese style. That indicates Shakespeare's works belong not only to Britain but also the whole world. They are the treasure of the world... Also, some young people appreciated our performance, too.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Jing-xian Zhang, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.9.

<sup>147</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Yi-lung Liu, Shanghai, 20 May 2004, see Appendix 6.6.

Kunju *Macbeth* was performed in Edinburgh, London, Wales, North Ireland as well as other European countries. According to Jia-ji Fang (方家驥) and Jian-ming Zhu (朱建明) in *Shanghai Kunju Opera* (1998), it was very popular and the audience applauded for as long as seven minutes at the end. One professor and researcher at the Department of English Language and Literature, University College London, claimed that Chinese Kunju was the most elegant theatre style he had ever seen in Edinburgh.

Why are the opinions so different between the actors, the audience and the British critics? This thesis suggests two ways to explain it. First, the negative view is expressed in British critics' attitude towards and knowledge of Kunju arts as well as the intention of adaptation by Shanghai Kunju Theatre. In Nozomi Abe's interview, Ninagawa's British producer, Thelma Holt, comments on the attitude of British critics that sometimes people are ignorant about what they are doing or they see you are doing something that is slightly different and they feel threatened by that. In fact, Holt's statement has also been supported by the exploration in Chapter 3 that most theatre criticisms towards Kunju *Macbeth* were a result of unfamiliarity, misunderstanding and even ignorance.

From the intention of the adaptation point of view, Shanghai Kunju Theatre tried to combine the three elements of 'Chinese,' 'Kunju,' and 'Shakespeare.' Accordingly, this thesis would suggest that Kunju *Macbeth* is still a native production which is mainly for Chinese audiences, and not Western. Through the study, this thesis discovers that Shakespeare's *Macbeth* became a totally

Chinese tale in the Kunju version and the sort of story we can find everywhere even in the West. Regarding this, then, the storyline should not be a problem for festival critics to appreciate. However, the Kunju version of *Macbeth* was still entitled *Macbeth* when they performed it in Edinburgh and the European tour afterwards, not *The Bloody Hand* as it was called when it was performed in China. Furthermore, the original plot in Shakespeare's play was changed significantly; even the names of the characters were all different. This caused a major identification problem with British critics as this production concentrated on presenting Kunju's manner. Considering that Kunju *Macbeth* was not Shakespeare's *Macbeth* anymore in terms of plot or the names of the characters, and without any familiarity with this Chinese historical form, it is not surprising that festival critics gave this production a lot of negative reviews.

In contrast, Ninagawa aimed to bring *Macbeth* to Japanese audiences as Kunju did for Chinese people; however, he adopted a different approach in terms of modifying the original text. With respect to the original play, he did modify the script in his 1985 version to meet native audience's needs, even if Ninagawa claims that he cannot alter the lines otherwise the whole play will collapse. Accordingly, this research identifies the intention that Ninagawa tried to tell the story without being interrupted by historical or allegorical details within Shakespeare's original. Since Yuji Odajima, the translator of the Japanese version of *Macbeth*, is famous for the sense of rhythm in his translation works, according to Abe's suggestion, this thesis would assume that Odajima's version of *Macbeth* has the closest sound to the English one. Based on Odajima's

*Macbeth*, Ninagawa then edited this script and deleted some lines in which the audience needed historical and allegorical knowledge to understand it. For instance, as mentioned in Chapter 4<sup>148</sup>, Ninagawa cuts the references to the Witches' familiars in Act I, Scene I of Shakespeare's text. Those three lines are difficult for Japanese people to understand and why they are here. Accordingly, this thesis would suggest that Ninagawa's policy for not changing the original text is with an exception of making the story understandable for his audience and without restructuring the original context. In his 1985 version of *Macbeth*, Ninagawa did not even change the names of characters. All in all, Ninagawa simply made Shakespeare's story more friendly to the Japanese audience; he even entitled this work with the word Ninagawa before *Macbeth* to become *Ninagawa Macbeth* to indicate this 1985 version. In fact, this *Ninagawa Macbeth* was also appreciated by Westerners; because it is still their *Macbeth* in which 'the structures of feeling' are familiar, it does not matter that some of the lines have been modified.

Second, a positive image is received from live experience and the actors' political concerns. Since actors are the ones who interact with the audience and thereby negotiate the live experience, they can definitely feel an audience's response. According to Simon Girdler, a former EIF Box Office manager, the critics cannot represent the audience. Girdler expressed: 'We all see things

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<sup>148</sup> See page 197.

through our own eyes, so the reviews are just critics' opinions.'<sup>149</sup>

Apart from the conflict between actors' live feelings and critics' opinions, actors' political concerns should also be taken into account. Since China opened its iron gate in the 1980s, more and more of its theatre companies have started touring abroad. Under these circumstances, it is particularly important for all companies to receive good feedback from overseas audiences in order to gain more support from the Chinese government. For example, *Shanghai Kunju Opera*, which is Shanghai Kunju Theatre's official record, does not mention at all that the box office was lukewarm for *The Peony Pavilion* when it was performed in Britain with *Kunju Macbeth* and *The Woman Warrior* altogether in 1987. As Yang Fang states in the interview with this researcher, 'people were indifferent ... probably because we focused on promoting *Kunju Macbeth* too much, that we somehow confused people.'<sup>150</sup> Zheng-hua Ji, as Ma Pai in *Kunju Macbeth*, says the same thing that compared with Ninagawa's rerun of *Macbeth* in National Theatre, the box office for *Kunju Macbeth* was rather bad.<sup>151</sup>

Unlike British and Japanese theatres that have professional theatre critics, it is appreciators, professional actors and scholars who mainly write theatre reviews in China. Those appreciators have much influenced Chinese traditional theatre because they not only financially support it but also are very knowledgeable. Most of them have gone to thousands of shows, and established their

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<sup>149</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Simon Girdler, Edinburgh, 18 November 2004, n.p.

<sup>150</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Yang Fang, Shanghai, 21 May 2004, see Appendix 6.3.

<sup>151</sup> Ninagawa *Macbeth* was running in the National Theatre, London on 17 September 1987, in which was around one month before Shanghai Kunju Theatre toured in London.

knowledge and good taste. When the appreciators express their opinions, 'we will form a judgement and take their advice if needed,'<sup>152</sup> says Yi-lung Liu at Shanghai Kunju Theatre. Ming-rong Zhang also provides an example. After seeing a new production entitled *Ban-chou* (班昭), one of the appreciators argued that it was not a Kunju performance. Zhang tried to respond that it was definitely a Kunju performance, but played in different ways. 'We adopted Western performance techniques, but sang the melodies and lyrics Kunju style. We remained with the Kunju instruments, music, and performing style,' says Zhang.<sup>153</sup>

Since the Festival critics did not appreciate Kunju *Macbeth* very much, what was the response from a Chinese point of view? Through her experience in the Shakespeare Festival in 1986, Ruru Li recalled that the reaction was distinctly weird, even while audiences appreciated the performance involving performers' distinctive singing and dancing skills. By contrast, comments in the forum during the Shakespeare Festival were very hostile. According to Li, 'Many felt that the production demonstrated that traditional Chinese theatre, imbued as it was with feudal ideology, could not present Shakespeare's works which were an expression of Renaissance humanism.'<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Yi-lung Liu, Shanghai, 20 May 2004, see Appendix 6.6.

<sup>153</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Ming-rong Zhang, Shanghai, 19 May 2004, see Appendix 6.10.

<sup>154</sup> Li, 1994:53



As to the point about the shortage of critics in China raised above, Ruru Li offered her observation on this production; as she said in *Blood-stained Hands: Macbeth in Kunju Form*, it is difficult to find any published criticism of the performance, since critics in China usually hesitate to comment adversely on the work of someone as eminent as Zuo-lin Huang unless prompted to do so by political pressures. However Shu-jun Cao and Fu-liang Sun did tactfully mention the case: 'Some comrades were shaking their hands after seeing the performance, and thought the production had "eaten up" Shakespeare.'<sup>155</sup>

So what is the reality of the perception of critics and artists who were telling the different stories in the production of Kunju *Macbeth*? According to Pavis in his *Analyzing Performance – Theater, Dance, and Film*, video is an exhaustive medium for performance analysis in terms of its bringing together a great amount of information, such as the correspondence between systems of signs and between image and sound. This information allows the researcher to grasp a sense of the performance style as well as the technical presentation.<sup>156</sup>

Based on the video evidence, this thesis suggests that Ninagawa's *Macbeth* was better understood, and thus better appreciated, by its Western audiences because the director spoke a 'Western theatrical language' in terms of Realism and theatre techniques. This theatrical language overcame the difficulty of the

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<sup>155</sup> Li, 1994:53

<sup>156</sup> Pavis, 2003:46

verbal, Japanese language. However, Shanghai Kunju did not speak this Western theatrical language. This likely contributed to its negative criticism.

Regarding how this Western theatrical language or concept interacts with audience preferences, Milton Shulman mentions that his impressions of Yukio Ninagawa's production relied primarily on its visual impact and stylised movements because he knew nothing about the Japanese language. The Japanese language was little more than 'exotic sounds' to him,<sup>157</sup> and these contributed to the overall visual impact of the production. The set designs in Kunju *Macbeth* were representing Chinese theatre tradition as an abstract illustration and leaving room for the acting. Yet the lighting design, as a key element creating the atmosphere in this production, seems inexperienced and does not work as effectively as in the Ninagawa *Macbeth*. This suggestion is based on Pavis' theory that the way to appreciate lighting in the theatre is to understand its impacts on other components such as scenography, costume, make up and the performers. Apart from some scenes, such as the three witches in the first scene, Lady Macbeth washing her hands, the forest moving and Macbeth being killed, the lighting in the whole work only functioned as illumination. It does not fully present either the relation between actors and the stage or this particular performance.

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<sup>157</sup> *The London Evening Standard*, 18 September 1987

Besides, because of the uses of black backdrop and simple set, the up-stage is always dark. It is understandable that all of these create a certain atmosphere, but the lighting function should have been emphasised more. In addition, compared with other lighting effects on stage, the following spotlights are always too bright. If there were any moment to use a little softer follow spotlight, the whole picture would be more harmonious. The use of full power follow spotlights as well as misconduct of the lighting design in *Kunju Macbeth* can also be explained in two ways. The first one is inexperience in employing Western lighting techniques in which the text, the set, as well as all of the elements in the performance have to have been taken into account. The second one is the emphasis on protagonists in Chinese theatre tradition.

Unlike Ninagawa's acclaimed *Macbeth*, this thesis would suggest that cultural misunderstanding had also occurred in the creation of *Kunju Macbeth* itself. The imitation and employment of Western theatrical techniques without true analysis and understanding of its essence is a major issue in intercultural theatre practice. This issue has also been confirmed with the experiment of musical productions in China, which was mentioned in the section of culture shock previously.

In spite of the fact that criticisms on *Kunju Macbeth* are varied, in the reality of British critics' impact on both Ninagawa and *Kunju Macbeths*, this thesis also suggests that EIF programming strategy and festival criticism fully represents the ideologies of Eurocentrism. Ninagawa has made *Macbeth* still *Macbeth*, whether in light of script context or performance text. It was more familiar and

easy to receive by the western critics and audience. For the Festival Directors, this sort of production will also play safe in terms of presenting 'strong' European traditions as well as oriental exotica. In contrast, Kunju *Macbeth* is not *Macbeth* anymore. In Kunju's manner and adaptation, *Macbeth* became *The Bloody Hand*, intercultural features in its origins, and nothing about European heritage remained. Although this de-Eurocentricised production is unfamiliar and difficult to digest, with the mixture of intercultural features, it is not like Noh or Kabuki with a purely oriental descent in which it is more difficult to make judgment and easy to connect the image to the so-called Orient. Moreover, this research would also argue that the Kunju version of *Macbeth* is more like a semi-finished hybrid product that might be called 'East is East', or 'West is semi- East' and would posit that many Western artists have done the same kind of thing in their so-called intercultural theatre practices.

Based on all the analysis carried out above, Pavis' comment in association with cultural translation is again supported by this research. Without understanding the roots borrowed, the works of intercultural practice will be just like the Chinese adage regarding efforts 'to try to draw a tiger and end up with the likeness of a dog,' and could even become a source of international conflict, as well as a joke.

All in all, through the analysis of how Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju's *Macbeth* were received by critics, this thesis discovers the reality of these intercultural works adopting different approaches to the appropriation of foreign elements.

Consequently, this different approach resulted in divergent feedback from not only the foreign critics but also the native ones. The following subsection will analyse whether or not Eastern intercultural works can truly communicate with Westerners without compromising their own artistic integrity.

### **5.3 The Implications of Festival Programming Policy: Criticisms of Ninagawa's and Kunju's Productions of *Macbeth***

Undoubtedly, the influence of programming policy in festivals is enormous in terms of cultural distribution, exchange as well as enlightenment, which also represents and reflects socio-cultural tendencies in the world. Moreover, the 1980s was a significant period in the world. Political circumstances shifted rapidly, economic conditions were prosperous, and cultural change was also flourishing. In this situation, intercultural theatre experiments were undertaken and developed, and these activities even reached great achievements. As this thesis mentioned in Chapter 3, Ariane Mnouchkine fused Kabuki, Indonesian and Beijing Opera styles with Western techniques in her productions of Shakespeare's *Richard II* in 1981 and *Twelfth Night* in 1982. Besides, Peter Brook's controversial production *Mahabharata* appropriated the text of Indian epics and presented it for a European audience in 1985. This intercultural experiment has also been pursued by Eastern artists such as Tadashi Suzuki, Yukio Ninagawa and the artists in Shanghai Kunju Theatre.

Consequently, Edinburgh International Festival as a major Western cultural

event was unavoidably involved in this new trend, and Frank Dunlop's dynasty is a good example for consideration. Based on the previous investigation in this thesis, over EIF's fifty-four-year history until 2000, there were only ten years with companies from non-European-American continents represented within the foreign companies who were involved in the musical programme. In this case, half of these years were in Dunlop's tenure. In addition, under the same conditions, this figure increased dramatically in the drama programme. There were a dozen years in which non-European foreign theatre companies took part in the Festival, of which seven out of twelve were invited by Dunlop. Furthermore, there were also twelve years with similarly foreign companies involved in the dance programme; five of these years were under Dunlop. Although his efforts were still focused on a few 'foreign' countries, compared with the rest of the directors, this thesis would still suggest Frank Dunlop is the only director who was truly reflecting and fulfilling the mission of delivering the widest range of international culture to Edinburgh.

This rapid change in programming policy by Frank Dunlop raised many criticisms in which critics argued the standard of programme was reduced and the Festival had no longer kept up its reputation. Nevertheless, because of this change, the works of Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre finally had an opportunity to meet Festival audiences and elicited the controversial judgments of Festival critics as mentioned before. Whether those criticisms were in favour of or against both productions, there are some hints within the context of criticisms associated with the Western ideologies of Orientalism and

Interculturalism which needs to be addressed.

Over the investigation, reviews about Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre, like those mentioned in Chapter 3 and others found in the rest of the papers, such as *The Independent* and *The Observer*, all mentioned 'stylisation' and 'religious' in Ninagawa's work and 'martial arts,' 'acrobatics,' and 'costumes' in Kunju's. In fact, those terms represented and established powerful and familiar concepts within Western intercultural theatre practice as well as Orientalism. The author of this thesis will not be surprised if 'stylisation,' 'religious,' 'martial arts,' 'acrobatics,' and 'costumes' encapsulate the total imagination and expectations of Western critics and audiences regarding Japanese and Chinese theatre. Unlike Ninagawa, who employed a large proportion of Western elements, the musical aspect of the Kunju – one of the form's most important aesthetic achievements – is somehow ignored by critics. Douglas Fraser observes:

The production at the Leith Theatre has a constant underpinning of exotic incidental music while the piercing whoops, which serve as voice projection, come as a trial for the Edinburgh ear. (*The Scotsman*, 29 August 1987, p.5)

Besides, all Kunju actors have more than twenty years of training beneath their belts, but their intricate skills were largely left unappreciated. As Alex Renton described in *The Independent*:

Kunju is direct and unsubtle, with lines delivered straight to the audience, and only the most simple emotions portrayed, hugely magnified...These rigidities are fascinating, but the obvious detriment to innovation is quite terrifying. (28 August 1987, p.11)

Perhaps Western critics' expectations of Eastern theatres are shaped and driven by Orientalism, and it would take a breaking down of established Western codes, rather than simplifying Eastern conventions, to bring about a true appreciation of Eastern theatre. This is aptly summarised by Edward Said:

That Orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on the Orient, and this sense is directly indebted to various Western techniques of representation that make the Orient visible, clear, 'there' in discourse about it. And these representations rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects, not upon a distant and amorphous Orient. (Said, 1978: 21-22)

Thus, research by Western scholars mainly depends on the 'transmission' of two voices from two different people: the voice from the Oriental and the voice from the Western scholar himself. In fact, the former is presented by the Western scholar that distorts and misrepresents the Oriental in his writing; the latter, also interpreted by the West, is the theory about the Orient, passing on from generation to generation, with even the related terminology or phraseology remaining invariable. Therefore, in any society, except for one that is totalitarian, some specific cultural forms do govern and affect others as if certain ideas are more influential than others – this is what Antonio Gramsci had said about cultural leadership, calling it 'hegemony.' Indeed, the phenomenon of 'hegemony' has been represented by EIF's Eurocentric programming policy over its history, as analysed previously.

In addition, Antonio Gramsci's notion of hegemony as well as Said's Orientalism are also confirmed by the criticisms directed towards both productions,



especially that of Ninagawa. The cultural leadership of Western Realism and other Western theatrical elements such as sets, lighting, and sound have become the mainstream of Western theatre. Critics found more of the familiar in Ninagawa *Macbeth* and thus found it easy to appreciate (and even criticise) the production. For example, Michael Billington in the *Guardian*, Christopher Edwards in the *Spectator*, Charles Osborne in the *Daily Telegraph*, as well as other critics, all mentioned and appreciated this realistic intercultural theatre piece with Western music as well as Eastern sound effects. As the result of this finding, this thesis would suggest that the critics were driven by the influence of Orientalism and Western Interculturalism and these were represented within their writing, as explored in Chapter 3.

Consequently, a major concern needs to be raised: whether or not both versions of *Macbeth* truly communicate with Westerners without compromising their cultural identities. In other words, whether or not these innovations affect a change in the cultural identities of traditional art forms. In the case of Kunju, Russell Davis of *The Observer* suggests that it will take prolonged studies of Kunju manuals to confirm if any of the new innovations are justified by the conventions of the form.<sup>158</sup>

The formation of cultural identity, according to Edward Said (1978), is finally a 'construction' by establishing opposites – 'us' and 'them'. Therefore, identity is

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<sup>158</sup> *The Observer*, 30 September 1987, p.17

far from static, but a much worked-over historical, cultural, social, intellectual and political process happening in all societies as a struggle between individuals and institutions. This thesis suggests that the innovations that have taken place with respect to Ninagawa's and Shanghai Kunju's versions of *Macbeth* are a manifestation of Said's theory. Any change in cultural identity – whether conscious or unconscious – is part of that process of interpretation and re-interpretation of boundaries between 'us' and 'them.'

For example, Shanghai Kunju's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* was undertaken out of their desire to introduce to the traditional Kunju audience a Western literary giant, and perhaps to bring about a new audience who may be aware of Shakespeare, but unaware of the art of Kunju – this has brought about an 'unconscious' change in Kunju's cultural identity. In contrast, Ninagawa took on a more 'conscious' process of re-defining cultural identity, in which he believes that his work represents an attempt to create something between the styles of Japanese theatre (whose traditions he regards as corrupt) and Western realism. Ninagawa expresses that Japanese people have to destroy the existing theatre to find their own identity. After all, they are wearing Western clothes, listening to rock music, driving Western cars. They also are eating Japanese rice and listening to karaoke, so why not just mix it up?<sup>159</sup>

Whether positive or negative reviews affected these two versions of *Macbeth*, this thesis aims to identify whether or not cultural translation can be truly

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<sup>159</sup> Miyamoto-Timmins, 1991:54-55

represented/ interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre practice. In doing so, the answers need to be found out as if both *Macbeths* change their own cultural identities from the artistic concept and whether there is any element in Kunju so fundamental that it cannot be changed?

Zheng-hua Ji, an actor from Shanghai Kunju Theatre, claims 'the lyrical singing style' and 'imaginary stage sets', the so-called 'one-table-and-two-chair' form, are fundamentals that cannot be replaced.<sup>160</sup> Jing-xian Zhang echoes this that 'The singing style is the most significant element in Kunju... Without the special, elegant, and lyric singing style, the play cannot be Kunju.'<sup>161</sup> Since music is the primary element in Kunju's artistic identity, how to combine both classic and contemporary within this intercultural work in terms of music is a difficult issue.

According to Li-chen Shen, the music arranger of Kunju *Macbeth*, the original Kunju melodies and forms must be maintained so as not to get rid of other minute and complicated parts. For bringing about the audience interest and attention, a few little interludes or new sounds could be added if needed. Based on the exploration carried in Chapter 4, this thesis suggests that even though there were some combinations both of the classical manner and Western elements within its score, the music in Kunju *Macbeth* still followed the traditional rule without damage to its essential character.

Apart from artists' opinions, this intercultural work of *Macbeth* still needs to face

<sup>160</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Zheng-hua Ji, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.5.

<sup>161</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Jing-xian Zhang, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.9.

the critical judgment of Chinese audiences. Li-chen Shen recalls that Shanghai Kunju Theatre invited some Kunju appreciators to the play before this intercultural theatre work opened to the public. The result of this preview was positive, the appreciators agreed this production was still Kunju but with different styles and elements.<sup>162</sup> Moreover, Jing-xian Zhang says:

Initially we were worried because Kunju is such an ancient type of theatre. After we adopted Western play in Kunju, we were worried that people would be against it or thought it nondescript... then the Kunju master Chuang-yin Zhou came to this play and told us that it was a splendid try. It was such an encouragement to us.<sup>163</sup>

In terms of the set style, set designer Bo-an Gong, who started from the West then turned traditionally Eastern as Ninagawa does, uses only a few platforms and simple props to represent both the spirit of Chinese traditional theatre and the basic element of Western stage. Then it becomes a 'Chinese set with Western atmosphere.' Beside the ideological arguments of the Kunju script mentioned before, with all the evidence, this thesis insists the identity of this intercultural theatre experiment is still presenting its traditional artistic character. Even with the misconduct of the lighting performance, it was also present in its role in the ancient performance as simply just for illumination, without obstructing the acting and singing.

The development of Shanghai Kunju Theatre mainly takes place internally. However, this thesis would suggest that cultural identity for Ninagawa is more like an issue on the extent of phenomenology. After learning Western theatre, he

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<sup>162</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Li-chen Shen, Shanghai, 20 May 2004, see Appendix 6.7.

started to read assiduously and made an intensive study of Noh and Kabuki theatre, from which he adopted some techniques and forms into his productions. The process revealed a merging between Eastern and Western theatre. As the finding revealed in Chapter 4, Ninagawa states that in his works 'the West and East have overlapped.' Apart from the hybridisation between West and East within Ninagawa's intercultural theatre practices, the 'crowd theory' even occupies a central position in his Easternised intercultural works and becomes a distinctive identity.

Accordingly, this 'crowd theory' is concretely represented in his *Macbeth*. Since this production was converted to the sixteenth-century feudal Japan of the Samurai world, in most of the scenes with crowds, he uses sixteen to eighteen actors on stage. For example, in the scene where soldiers report Macbeth's triumph to King Duncan, there are sixteen soldiers on stage. When Macbeth meets Duncan and accepts the conferring of his new title, there are eighteen actors on stage; when Lady Macbeth appears and greets Duncan, there are sixteen actors on stage; when Duncan's death is discovered, there are sixteen actors on stage; and when the Macbeths are enthroned, there are seventeen actors on stage.

All in all, according to the viewpoint of the artists, the cultural identities of both versions of *Macbeth* remained without any change or damage, whether the shows were presented at home or abroad. In this thesis, the researcher

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<sup>163</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Jing-xian Zhang, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.9.

personally agrees with this viewpoint above. However, this thesis would also suggest that theatre – as part of culture – must change all the time and move towards a new era. In fact, artists and actors in both companies, such as Zheng-yuan Cai, who is the Chief Executive of Shanghai Kunju Theatre, have proved this notion. From Cai's point of view, audiences of different times need different inspiration. For example, what people thought beautiful ten years ago may be nothing for people nowadays. This thesis also acknowledges that as times change, the arts must change, adjust, or be recreated if needed. However, the artists have to always remember a form's substance, because that is the thing that makes it unique. This being said, it is difficult to predict Kunju's future, as this development cannot change everything out of all recognition. Then, Cai does realise that the change should somehow depend upon the audience's need, not just the artists' pleasure. Also, as Cai insists, the artist should not just focus on something unchangeable. Any artistic form inevitably needs to be changed for various reasons, but the point is how to change it. It is necessary to understand its substance before it is changed. Also, according to Kunju actor Zheng-hua Ji, actors have to be open-minded, creative, and eager to take any challenge while practicing, developing, and producing such a traditional theatre type like Kunju. 'That will be deplorable if the tradition is seen as an old antique or platitude,' says Ji.<sup>164</sup>

The importance of shifting in artistic feature from time to time, this thesis

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<sup>164</sup> Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Zheng-hua Ji, Shanghai, 18 May 2004, see Appendix 6.5.

suggests, is also realised by Yukio Ninagawa. From his own experience, Ninagawa insists that 'Freelance directors can only prove themselves through their works. Nothing but the size of the audience and the quality of their works can guarantee their next jobs.' (Ninagawa, 1999: 129-130) In fact, the creations of *Macbeth* by both Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre still retain their own distinctive identities in which to communicate with a Western audience. Through Ninagawa's successful experiences, however, this thesis suggests that sublime and up-to-date theatrical language is paramount in fulfilling audience expectations and in actually communicating to the audience. This suggestion also explains why all the masterpieces in theatre have remained and been presented over and over again in different generations, not only to retain their eternal truth in the universe, but also with room for adaptation in different time and space.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions

This thesis has explored the question whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre practice. In order to attempt to answer this question and create a clear picture, the concepts of Orientalism and Eurocentrism in the programming policy of EIF, and a chosen sample of Western theatre works have been examined.

Firstly, from a native cultural identification point of view, lacking energy to represent the tendencies of the time will make an artistic form rigid and dead; also, over-focused platitudes and old-fashioned materials will lead an artistic form to lose its artistic spirit. Then this type of form will be on the decline, departing from time, and finally departing from the community. Artistic experimentation, therefore, reflects a sense of identity that is fluid and negotiable. Writers like Edward Said (1978), Tracey Skelton and Tim Allen (1999) reject the idea of culture as fixed, coherent, or natural, but they regard it as dynamically changing over time and space. It is the product of ongoing human interaction – constantly influencing and interacting with contemporary social, economic and political ingredients.

However, a blind confidence or even arrogance towards native cultures actually reveals part of a weakness when facing an intrusive vigorous culture. Through a deep look, this attitude is nothing but loss, weakness, and resistance as a fundamental conception is disappearing. When this condition is reached, people



will lose their energy to create/modernize their culture/civilization. That will cause a prolonged inertia and meanwhile lose all the glory.

This thesis suggests that the issue of cultural identification is still a double-edged problem nowadays. Although the debate between globalists and nationalists is controversial, under the phenomenon of rapid globalisation, this thesis suggests that the issue of cultural identification will ultimately depart from constricted regions and become part of the world. As Stephan Dahl states, people should realise continuous changes in the world – the changes in the advance of technology, in political and economic structures, and so on. They have become a continuum moving at great speed. Thus, cultural adaptation has become part of daily life.

Secondly, some scholars such as Clive Barker and Rustom Bharucha have made it clear that it is impossible to receive a fair treatment in cultural exchange if the native culture is somehow abandoned. However, it is a fact that absolute fairness and equality do not exist in international cultural exchanges. In other words, the cultural absence of mutual communications or understanding would not automatically disappear merely because of people's open minds. If we take Orientalism or Interculturalism as examples, this thesis says the perfect 'ism' or philosophy for the world would not be created until someday the prejudices among individuals, nations, and cultures are eliminated.

To eliminate those prejudices and understand others in objectivity and effectiveness means one must really completely immerse oneself in others'

cultures – which is impossible, for even a scholar or researcher who is very familiar with Eastern and Western cultures cannot do it. Thus, this thesis would suggest that what we need to eliminate is the illusion that leads us to pursue an unreal state in which the Eastern and Western cultures may perfectly fuse together someday. The 'global culture,' this thesis argues, is the illusion, because even through the adaptation of another culture, the adapting culture will still retain its unique identity as Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre did. Of course, the identities of these fused cultures might be changed or shifted but will not become a 'Disney' phenomenon as Pavis claims in Chapter 3, unless all the boundaries such as race, custom, language and other distinctive features were also eliminated by the adapted culture.

Concerning the encounter with the West, China and Japan have got similar situation. The Western artillery opened up the boundary of China in the Opium War (1840-1842), and also started the prologue of Western Powers' incursions. A similar situation also happened in Japan, but with totally different consequences. These two nations faced the intrusion of Western Powers with different attitudes toward this shock, and that caused different results. It is a historian's job to research the effects of this. However, it is a fact that the powerful nations still continue exporting their cultures/civilisation to the underdogs, even if the underdogs try to fight back by emigrating to the West, as David Henry Hwang did with his *M. Butterfly*.

Since cultural globalisation is inevitable, the question is how to face the Big Powers (surely China is now considered a Big Power too in terms of economic force), how to deal with the challenges from the Big Powers, and how to take measures to protect one's culture and self-identity. This thesis agrees with Zhu's idea that when two imbalanced cultures impact on each other, it is a bad choice for the weaker one to just close his mind and passively resist it. Furthermore, trying to avoid it over and over again will increase the gap in between and make the condition even more imbalanced. The only way to proceed is to face the fact and accept the challenge, take the merits from other cultures and fix the failings in one's own culture, and work hard to accomplish a better cultural exchange.<sup>165</sup>

While taking other's merits and fixing our own failings, no matter how many changes have been made, this thesis would suggest that great understanding is significant to agree upon and appreciate other's cultures. In doing so, this thesis would suggest that education and promotion are the prime solutions to improving people's understanding.

Through Bruce Lee's films and TV series, Chinese Kung Fu has been widely seen in the West and even become one of the major icons of Chinese culture which Westerners have become fascinated by, and even studied. This example is also supported by a live performance in a commercial theatre in London: *Shaolin Monk* was brought to the West End at the Peacock theatre for one-

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<sup>165</sup> Zhu, 1997: 230

month of performances, from 19 October to 19 November 2005. Apart from the exhibitions for the purpose of cultural exchange, this is a unique opportunity for a Chinese performer to display their skills in a Western commercial theatre.

Moreover, in the example of Shanghai Kunju Theatre, the Chief Executive Zheng-yuan Cai insisted that Western audiences could also appreciate Kunju's singing and subtle movements if the audiences were educated beforehand. Cai recalled his experiences when the Theatre performed *The Peony Pavilion* in Germany. *The Peony Pavilion* is one of the masterpieces in Kunju's repertory in which the singing and dancing are the major focuses for appreciation. Through the illustration on Kunju's theatre art before the performance, along with the discussion afterwards, the German audiences were fascinated by the beauty of the songs and movements.

In this regard, international arts festivals like EIF may become a primary source of education and promotion of such diverse cultural products for the audience, even becoming a catalyst that makes appreciation and understanding in cultural difference faster.

In the case of Japanese theatre, Ninagawa notices that Noh Theatre, as Japan's classical stage art, has gone through centuries of developments and changes from sacred rituals and folk festival entertainment, to become what it is today. Even though its essence and performing style is unique, kabuki, characterised by flamboyant dancing and elaborate costumes, can be questioned as the more popularised version of Noh in Japanese theatre history. Although Yukio

Ninagawa simply mixed the diverse elements from foreign and native cultures within his works, through an international intercultural platform as EIF does, this brings up an interesting question – whether or not Ninagawa's theatrical concepts and aesthetics will become a modern version of the mainstream in Japan, as Noh and Kabuki used to be?

Whether the answer is positive or not, we can be sure that Ninagawa has already made a splendid contribution to Japanese theatre, and even to world theatre. In *The Guardian*, reviewer Michael Billington's says, 'What we can learn (from Ninagawa) is that the theatre of the future will stem from a stylistic coalition.'<sup>166</sup> After visiting Japan in 1993, Michael Billington concluded that

...without a knowledge of Japanese, it is impossible to judge the play's literary skill. But what struck me, as so often in Tokyo, was the play's visual and visceral power, proving that Ninagawa's *Macbeth* was no flash in the pan...And it left me concluding that Japanese theatre can be stunning when it draws on its own country's rich past and present, and equally decadent when it relies on the worst excesses of occidental showbiz. (Billington, 1993: 252)

This thesis suggests that Billington's statement could also be applied to the rest of intercultural experiments in world in terms of 'drawing on its own country's rich past and present.' It is important to note at this point the danger of prematurely dismissing artistic experiments. The researcher of this thesis believes that critics and reviewers play a very important role in theatre. As theatre reviews try to capture audiences' thoughts, we need to address matters cautiously and admit that audiences at festivals such as the EIF sometimes lack the understanding to

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<sup>166</sup> 26 September 1987, p.14

appreciate certain valid artistic experimentations. If art is a reflection of life, then the beauty of life exists in all artistic creations, and it deserves to be truly appreciated by a discerning mind.

In conclusion, the point of this research emphasises whether or not cultural translation can be truly represented/ interpreted without distortion in the realm of intercultural theatre practices, by exploring how Edinburgh International Festival's programming policy is made and how it interacted with two different versions of *Macbeth* created by Yukio Ninagawa and Shanghai Kunju Theatre. Accordingly, this thesis suggests that some distortion within intercultural works is inevitable; it all depends upon how directors view the ingredients they appropriate from other cultures. Besides, the Festival Directors, especially Brian McMaster, have been criticised by this thesis for the strong Eurocentric ideology of their programming strategy. This researcher would also expect the new Festival Director to have a real 'international' perspective and understanding after McMaster leaves his post at the end of the 2006 Festival.

Although Edinburgh International Festival is not a cure-all in which to solve all cultural issues, again, this thesis would still strongly suggest that EIF can be a powerful tool and an ideal platform for cultural debate, integration, understanding as well as education. At the end of this research, there are still elements about the EIF and other performing arts festivals' provisions needing to be explored, for example, whether or not the EIF and other European arts festivals mainly look for the companies from the East who are on tour, and whether or not the programming strategy within other European international

arts festivals is mainly European- and North American-oriented. To broaden this research idea, these considerations might become part of the criteria for artistic valuation. Then, joined with economic, social and cultural impacts, a 'formula-like' model could be provided as a reference point for funding bodies and even for arts festival providers themselves to rate whether an event can be successful or not.

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Zhang, Ming-rong: Chia-che Hsieh, Interview with Zhang Mingrong, Shanghai, 19 May, 2004, CD-ROM.



## Appendix 1 Glossary

### Appendix 1.1 Japanese section

ARASHI, Tokushaburo	嵐 徳三郎	Kabuki actor
Butoh	舞踏カンパニー	Butoh is a Japanese contemporary performing art form that evolved during the 1960s as an expression of human awareness.
Bunraku	人形浄瑠璃	Refers both to the Bunraku theatre group, the major commercial puppet troupe headquartered in Osaka at the Bunraku National Theatre, and more broadly to the traditional Japanese puppet theatre
butsudan	仏壇	Buddhist altar
hinadan	雛壇	Stairs with special dolls for Girls' day
gagaku	雅楽	Japanese traditional court music
Joruri	浄瑠璃	Originally the name of the heroine of a sung narrative composed in the sixteenth century, as well as the style of music used for that piece,,joruri came to be a general term for the puppet theatre and for various styles of narrative music for shamisen and voice associated with the puppet and kabuki theatres.
kabuki	歌舞伎	A major genre of theatre that developed in the early seventeenth century The word kabuki, originally

meaning something like "slanted," was used to refer to outlandish behaviour or dress, and came to be written with three Chinese characters meaning "song-dance-art"

kagura

神楽

Shinto ritual performances, including music, song, dance, and some mime. In noh kagura also refers to a type of dance (MAI) representing the ritual performance.

KAN'AMI, Kiyotsugu

観阿弥 清次

(AD. 1333-1384) The father of Zeami. Kan'ami introduced the music and dance elements of the popular entertainment *kuse-mai* into *sarugaku*, and he attracted the attention and patronage of Muromachi shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408).

kanji

漢字

Chinese characters

*Kokinwakasyuu*

古今和歌集 (こきん  
わかしゅう).

An early Heian waka anthology, conceived by Emperor Uda (r. 887-897) and ordered by his son Emperor Daigo (r. 897-930) in 905. Its finished form dates to c. 920, though according to several historical accounts the last poem was added to the collection in 914.

KOSHIRO, Matsumoto IX

松本 幸四郎

Kabuki actor

KUNIO, Shimizu

清水邦夫

(1936-) Contemporary Japanese playwright.

Kyogen

狂言

Refers both to the major theatrical genre of kyogen and to the actors who perform it. Kyogen actors also perform

some roles in noh plays and the interlude (AIKYOGEN) between acts of noh plays. Kyogen (literally, wild words) also refers to play scripts in kabuki.

Man'yōgana

万葉仮名

Man'yōgana (万葉仮名) is an ancient form of Japanese kana\* which uses Chinese characters to represent Japanese sounds.

\***Kana** is a general term for the syllabic Japanese scripts hiragana (ひらがな) and katakana (カタカナ). These were developed as an alternative and adjunct to ideograph based characters of Chinese origin.

Manyōshū

万葉集 (Anthology of Myriad Leaves)

A Japanese poetry anthology from the Nara period written in *man'yōgana*.

Meiji Restoration

明治維新

The term refers to both the events of 1868 that led to the "restoration" of power to the emperor and the entire period of revolutionary changes that coincided with the Meiji emperor's reign (1868-1912).

MONZAEMON,  
Chikamatsu

近松門左衛門

(AD.1653-1725), The Japanese dramatist, he is generally considered Japan's greatest dramatist and is often called the "Japanese Shakespeare."

NINAGAWA, Yukio

蜷川幸雄

Yukio Ninagawa is a renowned Japanese theatre director, particularly known for his Japanese language productions of Shakespeare plays and Greek tragedies.

Noh

能

The earliest fully developed theatrical genre in Japan, Noh combines music,

dance, text, mime, costumes, and props. It was created in the fourteenth century (when it was known as sarugaku) and continues to be performed today.

NOMURA, Mansai

野村萬斎

Kyogen actor

ODASHINA, Yushi

小田島 雄志

The translator of Ninagawa's *Macbeth*

Sankai Juku

山海塾

Sankai Juku is part of the second generation of Butoh troupes in Japan. This company founded by artistic director, Ushio Amagatsu, in 1975, has premiered a new piece at a constant pace, approximately one every two years

sarugaku

猿樂

An entertainment imported from China that included acrobatics, magic, music, dance, comic pantomime, and trained-animal acts, especially with monkeys (saru), now often labeled "old sarugaku" (ko-samgaku). From the fourteenth century onward, sarugaku or sarugaku-noh was used as the general term for the noh theater as developed by Kannami and Zeami.

sekitei

石亭

Japanese garden full of stones on raked sand

shimpa

新派

Shimpa, means "new school," in opposition to Kabuki, the old school of actors. People started to call the new form "Shimpa" around the beginning of 1900s.

shingeki

新劇 (しんげき)

Singeki (New Drama, or Western-style

theatre) appeared as a reaction to kabuki and shimpa theatre.

SOMEGORO, Ichikawa 市川染五郎

Kabuki actor

Taika Reforms 大化の改新

The Taika Reforms of 646 AD. were a massive attempt by the central government to establish in Japan systems of government and administration which were closely patterned on Chinese models.

TAKAMORI, Saigo 西郷隆盛

(1827-1877 AD.) A great hero of the Japanese people, Saigo was one of the principal leaders responsible for the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate. He helped set in motion the forces that led to the Meiji Restoration, which restored direct imperial rule to Japan under the Meiji emperor, Mutsuhito.

Yamato-e 大和絵

Yamato-e is a style of Japanese painting inspired by Zen Buddhism and developed in the late Heian period.

ZEAMI, Motokiyo 世阿弥元清

(1363–1443 AD.), Japanese actor, playwright, and drama theorist. As a playwright, Zeami wrote works of astonishing poetic resonance, incorporating myth, legend, and literary allusion into densely interwoven imagery. As a drama critic, Zeami produced both practical instruction for actors and highly theoretical work which elevates the art of the Noh theatre to the level of court poetry and linked verse.

ZENCHIKU, Komparu

金春禅竹

(1405-1470 AD.), Noh actor and playwright who also wrote critical works on drama.

## Appendix 1.2 Chinese section

<i>Ban-chou</i>	班昭	One of the productions in Shanghai Kunju Theatre.
Bangzi	梆子	One of theatre forms in traditional Chinese Musical.
<i>The Butterfly Dream</i>	蝴蝶夢	One of Kunju's plays
CAI, Zhengren	蔡正仁	The Head of Shanghai Kunju theatre.
chi ba	起霸	The dressing ritual before military officer campaigns.
Chuan-Qi	傳奇	Chuan-Qi is a literary and musical southern dramatic form of flexible length that dominated the Chinese theatre throughout the Ming and early Qing periods, roughly from the late fifteenth century to early eighteenth century.
Chunaju	川劇	A theatre form which originates from the Sichuna province in China
dan	旦	Impersonated Young woman.
Daukuang Period	道光	1820-1850 AD. One of the eras in the Qing Dynasty.
FANG, Yang	方 洋	Banquo in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Feng Huan Chao</i>	鳳還巢	One of the plays in Peking Opera.
<i>Freedom Daily</i>	解放日報	One of the newspapers in China.
GONG, Boan	龔伯安	The set designer in <i>Macbeth</i>

Guanshu Period	光緒	1875-1908 AD. One of the eras in the Qing Dynasty.
<i>Han Gung Giu</i>	漢宮秋	One of the plays in Za-Ju.
hong sheng	紅生	Impersonated Kuan Yun-Chang, a famous General in Chinese history
hua lien	花臉	Impersonated a man with strong personality
HUANG, Zuolin	黃佐臨	The artistic director in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i> .
<i>Hui Lan Ji</i>	灰闌記	One of the plays in Za-Ju.
<i>Indictment</i>	寫狀	One of the scenes in Kunju <i>JiaoSho Ji</i> .
<i>Ji Shan Bin</i>	集賢賓	One of the songs in Kunqu.
Jl, Zhenghua	計鎮華	Macbeth in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
Jiajing Period	嘉靖	1522-1566 AD. One of the eras in the Ming Dynasty.
<i>JiaoSho Ji</i>	蛟綃記	One of the plays in Kunju.
Kangxi	康熙	The Kangxi Emperor (1654–1722) was the third Emperor of the Manchu Qing dynasty, and the second Qing emperor to rule over all of China, from 1661 to 1722. He is known as one of the greatest Chinese emperors in history. His reign of 61 years makes him the longest-reigning Emperor of China in history.
<i>Lan Ke Shan</i>	欄柯山	One of the plays in Kunju.
Lao-tzu	老子	Around BC. 600
lau sheng	老生	The role of impersonating an old man.



lienpu	臉譜	Facial arts in traditional Chinese Musical.
<i>Light Daily</i>	光明日報	One of the newspapers in China.
LIU, Yilung	劉異龍	The Royal Physician in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
Luantan	亂彈	One of the theatre forms in traditional Chinese Musical.
May Fourth Movement	五四運動	4 <sup>th</sup> May 1919, a significant cultural movement in China.
MEI, Lanfang	梅蘭芳	One of the significant figures in Peking Opera.
Ming Dynasty	明朝	1368-1644 AD.
Nanxi	南戲	Nanxi is one of the theatre forms in China, It was well developed and widespread in the south east of China between the twelfth century and fourteenth century. In the Ming Dynasty, Nanxi was absorbed by Kunju and became one of Kunju's sources.
<i>People's Daily</i>	人民日報	One of the newspapers in China.
<i>PAN, Jin-lian</i>	潘金蓮	One of the plays in Shanghai Kunju Theatre.
<i>The Peony Pavilion</i>	牡丹亭	One of renowned plays in Kunju.
<i>Pi Pa Ji</i>	琵琶記	One of plays in Za-Ju that has become a renowned repertoires in varied Chinese traditional theatres.
Pihuang	皮黃	One of theatre forms in traditional Chinese Musical.

Qing Dynasty	清朝	1644-1911 AD.
Qianlong	乾隆	The Qianlong Emperor (1711–1799 AD.) was the fifth emperor of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, and the fourth Qing emperor to rule over China.
rubato	散板	Free movement in the songs of traditional Chinese musicals.
<i>Shui Hu Zhuan</i>	水滸傳	One of the novels written in the Ming Dynasty by Shi Naian.
<i>Shang jin ma</i>	上京馬	One of the songs in Kunqu.
Shang mode	商調	One of the songs in Kunqu.
SHEN, Chuanzhi	沈傳芷	One of the most significant people in 'Chuan' generation in Kunju theatre.
SHEN, Lichen	沈利群	Music adapter/composer in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Sho yo le</i>	逍遙樂	One of the songs in Kunqu.
<i>The Spirit of Midnight Song</i>	夜半歌魂	One of the western style contemporary musicals in China, which adapted the plot of Andrew Lloyd Webber's <i>The Phantom of the Opera</i> .
Sung Dynasty	宋朝	960-1279 AD.
Tang Dynasty	唐朝	618-907 AD.
<i>Tang Taizong</i>	唐太宗	One of the repertoires in Shanghai Kunju Theatre.
<i>Tao Te Ching</i>	道德經	The work by Lao Tzu
<i>The Torch of Paris</i>	巴黎的火炬	One of the western style contemporary musicals in China.

<i>TSAI, Wen-ji</i>	蔡文姬	One of the productions in Shanghai Kunju Theatre.
Tungzhi	同治	The Tungzhi Emperor, (1856–1875) was the ninth emperor of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, and the eighth Qing emperor to rule over China, from 1861 to 1875.
WANG, Zhi-quan	王芝泉	Performed in <i>The Women Warrior</i> -- 擋馬 Stopping The Horse (楊八姐 Yang Ba-jie), 盜庫銀 Stealing The Crock of Silver (小青 Xiao Qing)
Wanli Period	萬曆	1573-1619 AD. One of the eras in the Ming Dynasty.
<i>Wenwei Daily</i>	文匯報	One of the newspapers in China.
wu sheng	武生	The role of impersonating a martial man.
XIA, Yongfeng	夏永鳳	Costume designer and make up master for Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Xin-Hua Net News</i>	新華網	One of the web-news sites in China.
Yuan Dynasty	元朝	1271-1368 AD.
Za -Ju	雜劇	One of the theatre forms in China. Za-Ju emerged as early as the Tang Dynasty, which involved various acrobatics. In the Sung Dynasty, Za-Ju was well developed to includes songs, dances, music as well as acrobatics.
ZHANG, Jingxian	張靜嫻	Lady Macbeth in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>
ZHANG, Mingrong	張銘榮	The Associate Director & one of the Witches in Kunju <i>Macbeth</i>

ZHANG, Yimou

張藝謀

Renowned Chinese film director.

*Zhao Shi Gu Er*

趙氏孤兒

One of plays in Za-Ju.

ZHU, ChuanMing

朱傳茗

One of the most significant people in  
'Chuan' generation in Kunju theatre.

## Appendix 2 Ninagawa *Macbeth* production team

Production Team	
Director:	NINAGAWA, Yukio (蜷川 幸雄)
Translator:	ODAJIMA, Yushi (小田島 雄志)
Set Designer:	SENO, Kappa (妹尾 河童)
Lighting Designer:	YOSHII, Sumio (吉井 澄雄)
Costume Designer:	TSUJIMARA, Jusaburo (辻村 ジュサブロー)
Choreography:	HANAYAGI, Kinnosuke (花柳 錦之輔)
Sound Effects:	HONMA, Akira (本間 明)
Fight Arranger:	KUNII, Masahiro (国井正廣)
Production:	NAKANE, Tadao (中根 公夫)
	Toho Co. Ltd. 東宝 (株)
Cast	
Macbeth:	HIRA, Mikijiro (平 幹二郎)
Lady Macbeth:	KURICHARA, Komaki (栗原 小巻)
Banquo:	TSUKAYAMA, Musane (津嘉 山正種)
Duncan:	SUZUKI, Mizuho (鈴木 瑞穂)
Malcolm (Son of Duncan):	SUGO, Takayuki (菅生 隆之)
Donalbain (Son of Duncan):	SEIKE, Eiichi (清家 栄一)
Macduff:	NAKAO, Akira (中尾 彬)

Lennox:	SHIMIZU, Mikio (清水 幹雄)
Ross:	IKEDO, Ko (池田 鴻)
Menteith:	KAKUMA, Susumu (角間 進)
Angus:	OTOMO, Ryuzaburo (大友 龍三郎)
Caithness:	YAMABI, Ken (やまび 研)
Fleance (Son of Banquo):	NAKAGOSHI, Tsukasa (中越 司)
Seyward:	SESHIMO, Kazuhisa (瀬下 和久)
Young Seyward:	NAKAGOSHI, Tsukasa (中越 司)
Son of Macduff:	MURAKAMI, Masatoshi (村上 雅俊)
Doctor:	KATAYAMA, Yosuke (片山 陽介)
Lady Macduff:	SHIBAMURA, Yoko (芝村 洋子)
Gentlewoman:	AOYAMA, Mayuko (青山 眉子)
Three witches:	ARASHI, Tokusaburo (嵐徳 三郎)
	DAIMON, Goro (大門 五郎)
	NAKAMURA, Shijku <sup>1</sup>
Lord:	SENOO, Masafumi (妹尾 正文)
Murderer:	FUCHINO, Naoyuki (渕野 直幸)

<sup>1</sup> All the names were found in the 1985 official programme, however, Nakamura's Japanese name could not be traced in contemporary Japanese theatre. There are two possibilities to explain this circumstance, the first one is the festival society made a mistake with the spelling of the name, it should be Shidou Nakamura (中村獅童) instead of Shijku Nakamura. Another possibility is that Mr. Shijku Nakamura no longer worked in Japanese theatre after Ninagawa *Macbeth*.

### Appendix 3 Shanghai Kunju Theatre *Macbeth* production team

<b>Production Team</b>	
Artistic Director:	HUANG, Zuo-lin (黃佐臨)
Kunju Director:	ZHENG, Chuan-jian (鄭傳鑑)
Director:	LI, Jia-Yao (李家耀)
Assistant Director:	ZHANG, Ming-rong (張銘榮)
Adaptor:	ZHENG, Shi-feng (鄭拾風)
Music:	SHEN, Li-chun (沈利群)
	KU, Zhao-lin (顧兆琳)
Set Designer:	GONG, Bo-an (龔伯安)
	SHEN, Gao (沈皋)
	CHEN, Hui-zhen (陳慧珍)
Lighting Designer:	JIN, Chang-lie (金長烈)
	WANG, Han-ru (王漢如)
Costume Designer and Make up Master:	TAN, Yu-xin (譚鈺新)
	XIA, Yong-feng (夏永鳳)
Utility Person:	SHEN, Xiao-ming (沈曉明)
Stage Manager:	SHEN, Xiao-ming (沈曉明)
<b>Principal Musicians</b>	

Drummer (司鼓):	WANG, Gen-qi (王根起)
Fluter (司笛):	HAN, Bao-kang (韓寶康)
<b>Cast</b>	
MA, Pai (馬佩--Macbeth):	JI, Zheng-hua (計鎮華)
Tie Shi (鐵氏--Lady Macbeth):	ZHANG, Jing-xian (張靜嫻)
DE, Ge (杜戈--Banquo):	FANG, Yang (方洋)
Zheng Wang (鄭王--King Duncan):	SHEN, Xiao-ming (沈曉明)
The Royal Physician (御醫):	LIU, Yi-lung (劉異龍)
JIAN, Nan (健男 --Lady Macbeth's Attendant):	TU, Wang-fang (涂婉芳)
	JIN, Cai-qin (金采琴)
Three Witches (女巫):	WU, Yi-jie (伍貽杰)
	LIU, De-rong (劉德榮)
	ZHANG, Ming-rong (張銘榮)
General MAI, Yun (梅云 --Macduff):	YAO, Zu-fu (姚祖福)
Lady MAI, Yun (梅妻--Lady Macduff):	XU, Jia-wan (徐嘉婉)
ZHENG, Yuan (鄭元--Malcolm):	WU, De-zhang (吳德璋)
(李豹):	LI, Xun-ba (李勛八)
(牛旺):	WANG, Yu-sheng (王雨生)



(鸚鵡):	MA, Xin-bao (馬新寶)
(杜寧):	CHEN, Tong-shen (陳同申)
	QIU, Huan (邱奐)
(張龍):	LIU, Jie (劉杰)
Maid servant (侍女), Guard (衛士)	The members of the Theatre (本團演員)
Officer (朝官), Maid (宮女)	The members of the Theatre (本團演員)

## Appendix 4 Kunju Macbeth Score

## 见龙泉心潮陡地涨

1=G (正宫调)

《血手记·嫁祸》马佩唱

计镇华演唱  
顾兆琳作曲  
沈利群

〔集贤宾〕 渐快

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见 龙 泉 心 潮 陡 地

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转 眼 间 赠 剑 人 要 剑 下

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亡。

3̣ (1̣ 7̣ 6̣ 1̣ 5̣ 6̣ 5̣ 5̣ 5̣ 6̣ 5̣ 4̣ | 3̣ 5̣ 6̣ 7̣ 3̣ | 2̣ 5̣ mp 6̣ 7̣ 0 6̣ 1̣ 2̣ 3̣ 2̣ 3̣ 5̣ 4̣

却 怎 的 事 临 头 心 旌

3) 2̣ 3̣ 5̣ 4̣ 3̣ 5̣ | 6̣ 2̣ 1̣ 7̣ 6̣ 6̣ | 5̣ - 0 2̣ 3̣ 1̣ 7̣ 6̣

乱 晃, 迷 茫 茫

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知 在 何 方, 知 在 何

1̣ 5̣ 6̣ 4̣ 3̣ 2̣ - | 7̣ 3̣ 1̣ 7̣ 6̣ (5̣ 6̣) | 7̣ 7̣ 6̣ 5̣ 6̣ 4̣ 5̣

方?

6̣ - 6̣ 1̣ 2̣ 3̣ - | 6̣ 5̣ 6̣ 5̣ 6̣ 5̣ | 6̣ -

方?

j=120 1/4 3̣ 5̣ 3̣ 2̣ | 1̣ 2̣ 1̣ 7̣ | 6̣ 7̣ 6̣ 5̣ | 3̣ 5̣ 3̣ 2̣ | 1̣ 6̣ 3̣ 5̣

紧打慢唱

2317 | 6̣ 6̣ 6̣ 6̣ 1̣ 6̣ ) mp 2̣ 3̣ - 2̣ 3̣ 5̣ 1̣ 7̣ 6̣ 1̣ 2̣ -

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$p$  3 0 3 6 (6. 6 6 6)  $\overset{mf}{7}$  7 6 6  $\overset{f}{\dot{1}}$   $\dot{1}$  - (3  $\dot{2}$   $\dot{3}$   $\dot{2}$   $\dot{1}$  7. 7 | 7 7 7 6 5 6  $\dot{1}$  0) |  
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 (唱) 一 会 儿 它 变 短 变 长, 一 会 儿

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 一 次 次 滑 脱 手 掌! (白) 使 劳 神 者 神 疲, 劳 心 者 心 碎, 劳 力 者 空 忙!

说明: 根据1986年10月13日上海昆剧团于上海戏剧学院实验剧场演出实况录音记谱。

## Appendix 5 Plates

### Appendix 5.1 Kunju Meets Ninagawa in *Macbeth*

#### Kunju *Macbeth*



Plate 1.1 Ma Pai - General Macbeth



Plate 2.1 Ma Pai - King Macbeth



Plate 3.1 Tie Shi - Lady Macbeth

#### Ninagawa *Macbeth*



Plate 1.2 General Macbeth



Plate 2.2 King Macbeth



Plate 3.2 Lady Macbeth

**Kunju *Macbeth***

Plate 4.1 Tie Shi - Lady Macbeth (hand washing scene – with two drops of blood on her forehead)

**Ninagawa *Macbeth***

Plate 4.2 Lady Macbeth (hand washing scene)



Plate 5.1 Three Witches



Plate 5.2 Three Witches



Plate 6.1 Zheng Wang - King Duncan



Plate 6.2 King Duncan

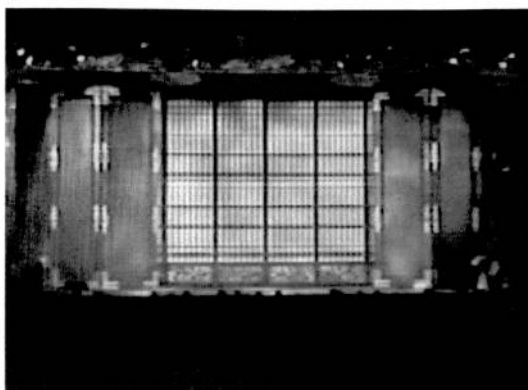
**Kunju *Macbeth***

Plate 7.1 General De Ge (Banquo)

**Ninagawa *Macbeth***

Plate 7.2 General Banquo

## Appendix 5.2 Japanese and Chinese Set Designs



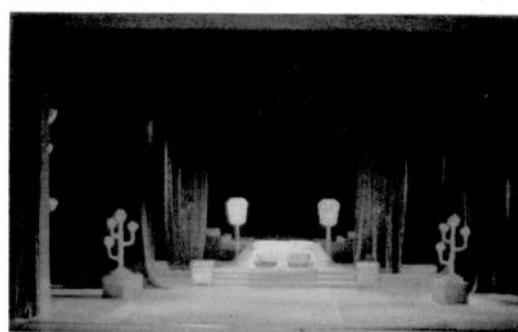
Ninagawa *Macbeth* – before opening



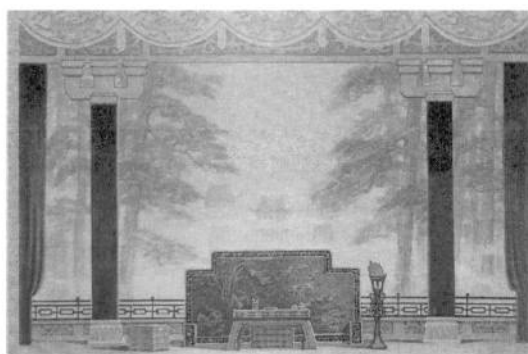
Ninagawa *Macbeth* - Act 3, Scene 1



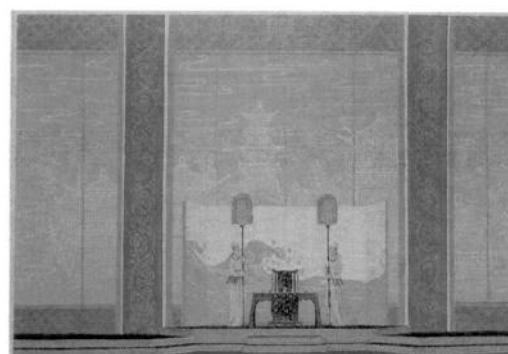
Ninagawa *Macbeth* - Act 4, Scene 4



Kunju *Macbeth*



Kunju *Tsai Wenji*



Kunju *Tang Taizong*



Kunju *Pan Jinlian*